



John Lenders MP

Member for Southern Metropolitan Region

Representing the Electorates of Albert Park, Bentleigh, Brighton,
Burwood, Caulfield, Hawthorn, Kew, Malvern, Oakleigh,
Pahran and Sandringham



21 August, 2008

Dr Leslie Cannold
Spokesperson, Pro Choice Victoria
c/- YWCA Victoria
Reply Paid 188
Carlton South 3053

Dear Dr Cannold,

I write in reference to your correspondence expressing your support for Model C of the Law Reform Commission's report to the Victorian Government on options for reform of the law relating to abortion in Victoria.

As you know the Brumby Government sought advice from the Victorian Law Reform Commission in August, 2007, about options to clarify the Law relating to terminations of pregnancy, and to remove abortion from the Crimes Act. The Commission's report was tabled in May and after after consideration of the advice contained therein the Government has introduced legislation into the Parliament this week.

The Abortion Law Reform Bill 2008 is designed to provide Victorians with a modern legislative framework that reflects community attitudes and current clinical practice. The Government has committed to legislation that provides clarity for women, health practitioners and the community about the circumstances in which a termination of pregnancy can be performed. It also should be noted that by clarifying the law in this area, the Government is not intending to expand the extent to which terminations occur, or restrict access to services.

The Bill provides for the following conditions:

Terminations of pregnancy would be regulated like any other medical procedure up to 24 weeks gestation. After 24 weeks gestation, a registered medical practitioner may perform an abortion on a woman only if the medical practitioner –

- Reasonably believes that the termination of pregnancy is appropriate in all the circumstances and
- Has consulted at least one other medical practitioner who also reasonably believes that the termination is appropriate in all the circumstances.

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In considering all the circumstances the registered medical practitioners must have regard to all relevant medical circumstances and the woman's current and future physical, psychological and social circumstances.

The Bill is subject to a conscience vote by Government Members of Parliament. I am aware that there are diverse views in my electorate on this complex issue and I acknowledge and thank you for taking the time to articulate your view.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'John Lenders', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

JOHN LENDERS MP
Member for Southern Metropolitan Region