



Hope Mission Network: a mission network of the Presbytery of the Uniting Church in South Australia

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HopeNet (network of the Uniting Church in South Australia) Statement on the Abortion Reform Bill (SA) 2018

HopeNet represents some 60 Uniting Church congregations across South Australia and on their behalf, we write to express dismay at the Abortion Reform Bill and its implications for unborn children, their mothers and the community.

We believe in the sanctity of human life and that the killing of unborn children in the womb reflects poorly on the society in which they live and in which they should be able to expect protection. A society that does not value human life from foetus to old age we believe has lost its moral compass. It is further distressing that this bill, if passed, would enable abortion to occur up to immediately before birth. This means that it would be legal to kill a child which a few minutes later would have protection under the law.

The aim of this Bill is to remove all legislative reference to abortions in SA, and therefore the removal of all restrictions. Consequently, there would be no restrictions on who performs an abortion procedure, how or when it is performed, and there would be no record keeping. Possible consequences of the passing of this Bill include:

- An increase in the already too high rate of related mental health issues for the mother, family members, medical staff and others.
- Termination at 9 months is much more obvious than at 6 months and so would be more widely known about, with the resultant potential for more mental health issues.
- Abortions will be performed on the basis of trivial reasons, or no reason, resulting in even less regard for the unborn or pregnancy.
- An increase in instances of coercion, as there would be more time to “persuade”.
- Malpractice within and without authorised medical clinics with an associated increase in problems with the physical health of women undergoing the procedure.
- The frequency of babies surviving late term abortions, already too high, necessarily increasing, and the consequent entering of the horrifying realm of infanticide.

- A possible increase in Caesarean abortion, because of very late term procedures, and the consequent need for legal differentiation between that and Caesarean birth
- The total inability to track these consequences because of no record keeping, further putting at risk women's mental and physical health and the ability to monitor the effect on the South Australian community.

If passed, this bill will become the most radical abortion law in the country with protection for women and unborn children severely reduced, and issues with abortion exacerbated. We join with many other Christian denominations in deploring this bill before parliament and we urge, for the sake of our state and country, that members of the South Australian Parliament do not pass it into law.

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