A state newsletter of

FamilyVoice AUSTRALIA

VoxLink

South Australia

March 2017

NT govt pushes dangerous RU486 abortion pill

The Northern Territory government is moving to change the Medical Services Act to provide women access to "termination of pregnancy services".

A discussion paper for the proposed reform details the termination of "unwanted" pregnancies between one week and not more than 23 weeks gestation through the use of the drug mifepristone, more commonly known as RU486.

RU486 is used in association with another drug called Misoprostol which a woman takes at home 48 hours after RU486 is administered. The two drugs together induce termination which has the "same effect as a naturally occurring miscarriage," according to the paper.

Currently, the termination of pregnancy (abortion) is a criminal offence in the Northern Territory under the Criminal Code Act except if performed under the limited circumstances described in Section 11 of the Medical Services Act. Abortion under those "limited circumstances" can only be carried out in public hospitals.

The paper argues that the definition of pregnancy termination should be broadened to include surgical procedure and the use of RU486.

As the Criminal Code provisions currently focus on the public health service, the goal is to include private hospitals, day surgery facilities and clinics as approved places to perform RU486 abortions not just in "limited circumstances" but rather, on demand. The paper clearly defines the 'termination of pregnancy' as "intentionally causing the termination of a woman's pregnancy by: (a) using an instrument; or (b) using a medicine or a combination of medicines; or (c) any other means."

The dangers of RU486

FamilyVoice SA/NT Director David d'Lima is asking Northern Territory MPs to weigh all the evidence before voting on a bill allowing the use of the abortion drug RU486.

"Australia's Therapeutic Goods Administration has approved RU486, despite evidence that it has led to the deaths of some 20 women overseas. One Australian woman died from septicaemia after taking RU486 in 2010," Mr d'Lima said.



Hundreds of women have reported severe side-effects from the RU486 abortion pill

Hundreds of women have reported severe side-effects from RU486, including prolonged pain, blood loss and infection. There is a higher RU486 complication rate than for surgical abortions, and mental ill-health can follow, since mothers feel their baby being expelled over several days.

"Yet the government seems to insist that the drug would be an advantage for women in remote areas," he said.

David d'Lima says the evidence shows the reverse is true. "Lack of nearby medical care would place women in remote areas at greater risk when RU486 complications arise," he said.

In a media release, Independent Member for Nelson Gerry Wood said the discussion paper is nothing more than a "one-sided opinion piece."

Mr Wood said a truly independent discussion paper cannot push a particular viewpoint but would clearly highlight alternative views – including the dangers of the abortion drug – so that people reading the document could understand the implications of the proposed changes and base their own assessment from facts, instead of bias.

Mr Wood says pro-abortion advocates are pushing the issue, with sections of the media, without adequate debate and in the absence of thorough research.

The proposed changes would come into effect in July.

Babies left to die horrifies many

A popular FamilyVoice social media alert on Australian babies surviving abortions and being left to die shows Australians are horrified by this practice.

A FamilyVoice Facebook update on February 23 with world-wide examples of how these babies die was re-shared 554 times by concerned citizens.

The post explained that 26 such babies in WA were left to die from 1999 to 2014. It is estimated that between 8000-10,000 babies are aborted in WA every year.

In Queensland there are approximately 10,000 to 14,000 abortions per year. In 2015, 27 of those babies were born alive and left to die after botched late term abortions. This was revealed in 2016 by Minister for Health, Cameron Dick, in response to a question on notice from Cleveland MP Mark Robinson.

It is commonly estimated that one percent of all abortions are late term, which means between 1 in 4 and 1 in 5 late term abortions in Queensland result in a baby born alive.

"The practice of allowing a baby to survive an abortion and leave it to die alone and in excruciating pain is both tragic and unacceptable," said FamilyVoice Queensland Director Ricky Ohl.

"Please tell your local MP of your desire to see a parliamentary investigation in Queensland on this issue."

A recent WA leaders debate revealed neither major party leader would support such an inquiry. WA Liberal party leader Colin Barnett rejected it on the basis that it would be "divisive".

Christians defend democratic freedom

A new bill placing an excessive electoral burden on small-party candidates prompted a peaceful prayer gathering outside SA parliament.



The peaceful gathering outside SA Parliament on 26 February

About eighty supporters of the conservative Christian group Adelaide Arise voiced their opposition to a dangerous bill outside the South Australian Parliament on 26 February.

In November 2016, the Parliament of South Australia began reviewing a bill that would make it much harder for voters to elect independent or minor party candidates to the Legislative Council (the upper house of Parliament).

The proposed legislation, the Electoral (Legislative Council Voting) (Voter Choice) Amendment Bill, would undermine the ability of the upper house to check and resist excessive or ill-considered governmental ambitions and actions.

Adelaide Arise told *VoxLink* that the bill would deny representation to voters who are losing confidence in the major parties. If passed, the two main parties would effectively have the entire Parliament to themselves. A party would simply wait its turn to form government, and during its elected term operate with dictatorial power.

"Formed last year, the movement aims to help concerned people promote Christian values in the culture," said spokesman Bill Wright.

"We oppose recent unwise laws and proposals that confuse gender identity, promote the same-sex agenda, and undermine democracy."

FamilyVoice State Director David d'Lima urged participants to connect more closely to the Parliament, "which persists in passing" anti-family laws.

"The things that are going wrong are happening under our watch, and we need to repent of our failure to connect," he said.

"We should especially oppose legislation that would effectively deny minority representation in the state's Upper House of Parliament."

Addressing the rally, Rev Ian Clarkson spoke on the preamble to the Australian Constitution, that describes the people as 'Humbly relying on the blessing of Almighty God'.

"That is the undergirding foundational truth of all we could hope for that is good for our great country," he explained.

"Let us be true to the noblest thought of our Founders. Let us honour and walk with it in our daily lives. From homes to schools to Parliaments to the decision-making centres of the nation."

Mothers needing support

News that Australia increased funding to Planned Parenthood International to facilitate abortions overseas came as a shock to many Australians

Instead of funding overseas abortions, FamilyVoice is encouraging the Australian government to provide positive and compassionate solutions for women both in Australia and abroad who may feel they have no choice but to access abortion.

"Delivering an extra $9.5 million of Australia's overseas aid to abortion provider Planned Parenthood is not the right solution to the problem," said FamilyVoice National Director Ashley Saunders.

"This decision made by Foreign Minister Julie Bishop on 16 February is ill-informed."

Australia should not partner with SPRINT co-founder Planned Parenthood, which has profiteered from selling baby parts in the USA. Australia should instead fund birthing facilities and obstetrics through more trustworthy organisations, he said.

"Many mothers actually want to keep their babies but lack the support they need. We should be helping women in developing countries with access to proper birthing facilities, information and support, not abortion.

"These same things should be made available to women in Australia."

One positive compassionate action would be to introduce baby drop-off boxes around



Australia, at key public buildings, he said.

In February 2016, NSW Deputy State Coroner Hugh Dillon recommended introducing baby drop-off boxes following the tragic death of a newborn baby whose remains were discovered at a Sydney beach. Baby safe boxes have been used with great success in other countries including South Korea, the Czech Republic, Germany, Canada and Japan.

Rev Saunders also calls upon the government to introduce "safe haven" laws which protect mothers who abandon newborns from facing prosecution.

"Mothers shouldn't face prosecution if they feel they have no choice but to abandon their newborns. Our government policies need to provide mothers with what they actually need - love, compassion and support; not termination."

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PUBLISHER:

FamilyVoice Australia
4th Floor, 68 Grenfell St, Adelaide SA 5000
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PUBLISHED:

March, June, September, December

EDITOR:

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PRINTER:

Openbook Howden, St Marys SA 5042

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Editorial

Conservative revolution or tipping point?

The national political landscape was upset this year after South Australian Senator Cory Bernardi's resignation from the Liberal party on February 9, the culmination of years of deep disquietude with the direction of the federal Liberal party.

Bernardi expressed his disenchantment with the Liberals back in a November 2016 blog post in which he said: "It is not and has never been the Liberal Party's job to pursue the 'regressive' Left agenda. … Political parties, if they are to survive, need to have a strong base of principled conviction that shapes and frames policy development. They don't drift along wondering where the tide of public opinion will take them. Instead, they take up the oars with intent and try to convince others to join them on the journey."

The Australian Conseratives party is not innately Christian, but many of its principles show a deep respect for Christian values.

Bernardi wrote in his 2013 book *The Conservative Revolution*: "The framework of our Western moral tradition can be found in the wisdom of the Ten Commandments and in the lessons of Christ and the life of the Apostles. Thus, secular or not, our society is based on the principles of religious faith, borne of the natural law that is engraved on our very heart, reflected in our customs and codified in our laws."

Bernardi is a strong supporter of traditional man-woman marriage. During a September 2012 debate with Labor Senator Penny Wong, he described the push for same-sex "marriage" as coming from "radicals" who were determined to destroy the social fabric of Australian society. He questioned where the militant campaign would lead, if society was prepared to redefine marriage based on the "latest criterion" that it should be allowed irrespective of gender.

Cory Bernardi has been a very vocal and unwavering opponent of the so-called "Safe Schools" gender ideology program. His outspoken stance on the issue ultimately lead to his office being invaded, trashed and defaced by an angry group of less-than-tolerant pro-LGBT students.

In *The Conservative Revolution*, Bernardi raises concerns about non-traditional families, surrogacy, abortion and euthanasia and calls on fellow conservatives to help to reverse the trends in social acceptance of changing attitudes that has helped usher us into a "morbid new world" by using sanity and reason. He wrote that it is "horrendous and unacceptable" that the abortion "death industry despatches 80,000 to 100,000 unborn children [in Australia] every year." He also believes that life begins at conception.

Being the arch enemy of the Australian Greens and what he calls their "regressive leftist agenda," he decries environmentalism campaigns and so-called renewable energy. He says the burqa is a "shroud of oppression" and should be banned. He also denies humans are the primary cause of climate change. He also wants to strike 'insult' and 'offend' out of Section 18C of the Racial Discrimination Act.

On the party website, Australian Conservatives' principles include limited government, personal responsibility, free enterprise and civil society - all hallmark facets of the centre right.

Following Bernardi's resignation, former Prime Minister Tony Abbot took the opportunity at the end of last month to launch a blistering attack on current Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull. He outlined a five-point plan to recover the Liberal government's conservative credentials through such moves as cutting immigration, ending the renewable energy target, cutting taxes, cutting spending, and scrapping the Human Rights Commission.

Like Bernardi, Abbott wants to steer the Liberal ship towards conservative values. Whatever is in their future, they both see it as their conscientious duty to put Christian-derived conservative values back on the national agenda, and that will be good for all Australians.

Letters

Abortion sorrow

Hearing that babies are being left to die after late term abortions totally sickens me to the pit of my stomach. Babies suffer pain, unbelievably so.

Many do not believe that fetus' are not viable or feel no pain. I have experienced an abortion many years ago, advised by various medical reasons and I hated it!

It *does* have an emotional impact on a woman. Especially Christian women because they know that God knows each and every one of us before we are conceived and born. People may scoff, but I truly believe that. Read Psalm 139.

Anne Reeves
(Location withheld)

God said: "Before you were formed in your Mother's womb I knew you." No excuse to let these little souls die when so many would love to adopt them and give them the chance they deserve.

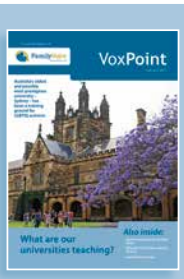
Joe Grogan
Melbourne, VIC

A national tragedy and murder whichever way you look at it. It's appalling that doctors and nurses are complicit in the destruction of these babies. One section of the profession works around the clock trying to save babies born prematurely - as early as 25 weeks - whilst other medically qualified butchers make fortunes destroying these tiny people. No government should be considering legalising the murder of the unborn at any stage of development.

(Name withheld)
Northmead, NSW

Where are you my mother, my protector, my nourishment
If I could speak I would beg that you rescue me
Hear my cry as I slowly die
Your empty arms are my broken heart
But as you turn away
Others unite to pray

Judi Walker
Wangaratta, VIC



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Free speech advocate wins court battle

Bernard Gaynor slams anti-discrimination board as "political thought police"

Free speech campaigner Bernard Gaynor, a Catholic father of seven from Queensland and former military man, received a favourable judgment on February 3 in his battle with the New South Wales Anti-Discrimination Board and the New South Wales Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NCAT).



Bernard Gaynor

"I've fought this case very hard for three years now and I think this case sets a huge precedent," Mr Gaynor told *VoxLink*.

Until the favourable ruling, Gaynor faced the prospect of appearing before what he called a "kangaroo court" and being ordered to issue a formal apology and pay fines up to $1.6 million to "anti-free speech" activist Garry Burns. Failure to do so could be considered contempt and opened the possibility of Gaynor's imprisonment.

One of the 32 complaints raised by Mr Burns related to his objection to Bernard Gaynor's blog about naked gay men exposing themselves to children at the Toronto Pride Parade in Canada. Another complaint arose from Gaynor's critique of remarks made by an Australian judge concerning incest in the context of the cultural embrace of homosexual behaviour. According to Gaynor, the ruling ends "the tyranny of the NSW Anti-Discrimination Board and its serial complainants" and prevents them holding persons to account for action that occurred outside NSW.

"But, I am disappointed that the arguments on political communication and religious freedom weren't considered. The judges only ruled on jurisdiction and those battles will come another day," he said.

The key takeaway, Gaynor said, is "the Anti-Discrimination Board themselves are operating entirely outside the law. They are unconstitutional.

"They are nothing more than political thought police."

Gaynor is not confident that a formal inquiry will be conducted. But he has told his legal team to begin legal action against the NSW Anti-Discrimination Board, which he believes will be successful.

"The Acting President of the New South Wales Anti-Discrimination Board has admitted in writing that her organization has breached its own statutory obligations under the Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 (NSW). The Board failed to provide me with information in relation to its 'investigations' into me," Gaynor said.

He also hopes the NSW Police will take appropriate action against Burns for his decision to contact Islamic organizations and offer them Gaynor's personal details, including his family's home address. The subsequent caused Gaynor family members "great stress" and as a result they were forced to seek residence elsewhere for their own safety.

So far, the police have declined to take any action on the basis that Gaynor was subject to anti-discrimination complaints.

Marriage inquiry fails to rule on religious freedom

Religious freedom applies to all citizens, FamilyVoice told the recent inquiry

The February final report from the Select Committee on the Exposure Draft of the Marriage Amendment (Same-Sex Marriage) Bill did not affirm the right of conscientious objection for all citizens, and did not uphold freedom of religious practise for businesses and government workers.

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The Committee members agreed that "under current human rights instruments and jurisprudence, there have been no decisions that oblige Australia to legislate for same-sex marriage. That said, there has been no suggestion that there are any legal impediments to doing so."

The Committee did not reach agreement on whether exemptions due to the religious freedoms of business owners and employees should be accommodated for in same-sex marriage legislation.

However, their final report cited the Institute for Civil Society's argument that aspirational religious duties are to be admired: "Persons with a strong religious or conscientious duty will act contrary to their self-interest, economic and physical security and pleasure to fulfil the duty."

Addressing the Committee on 25 January, FamilyVoice former National Director Dr David Phillips said, "Current provisions in the Marriage Act 47(a) affirm that a minister of religion can refuse to solemnise any marriage they want to. No discrimination and no need to try to justify their reasons. However, a civil celebrant does not have that freedom. The proposals in the draft give special treatment for homosexuals (surprise, surprise).

"47(a) currently doesn't mention race, people under or over a certain height, those with tattoos, Christian ministers refusing to marry Muslims or Buddhist and vice versa, etc. Redefining marriage has nothing to do with equality and everything to do with forced conformance," he said.

Dr Phillips referred to conscientious objection in times of war as enshrined in the Defence Act, and further argued, "The bill only protects ordained Christian ministers, which is a very narrow exception. The exception, if it is to be there at all, needs to apply to every Australian citizen in every area of belief, every area of practice, every area of association and every area of family formation."

The final report ended by quoting Professor Nicholas Aroney and Dr Joel Harrison: "Religious freedom has often been treated as a second-class right, while antidiscrimination laws have been given priority… Great care needs to be taken to ensure that a focus on the first-mentioned right (freedom from discrimination) does not diminish the others (e.g. freedom of religion, association and cultural expression and practice)."