

Executive Officer
Victorian Parliament Law Reform Committee
Parliament House
Spring Street
EAST MELBOURNE VIC 3002

INQUIRY INTO ACCESS BY DONOR-CONCEIVED PEOPLE TO INFORMATION ABOUT DONORS

1. As a supplement to my previous submission. I submit that this inquiry should be titled "Inquiry into access by donor-conceived people to information about **their own family members**".

2. I submit that this inquiry is not a question of *balancing* rights and interests. For donor conceived people currently do not have any recognised right to balance against that of the "donor". Even if donor conceived people are awarded access to their records (assuming those records still exist) the donor retains the right to refuse any contact with their biological child. Contact between unwilling parties can not be forced, therefore any arguments based on the need to balance rights stemming from a fear of an invasion of privacy are unfounded.

3. I submit that the oft quoted "anonymity agreement" is a **myth** that has been perpetuated via a succession of inquiries and reports. My biological father's "anonymity agreement" (consent form) is printed on page 8 of the Interim report of the Victorian Parliament Law Reform Committee (September 2010), as you can see whilst the recipient (my mother) may not seek the identity of the donor, I am in no way bound or obligated not to seek his identity.

4. Therefore I argue that the core issue of this inquiry is not one of examining the validity of alleged agreements but (as a matter of urgency) is concerned with the security and status of the donor records in question and how best to facilitate access to the information contained within them.

5. I submit that the adoption model (resulting from the law reforms of 1984) is the best way to sensitively manage the handing over of information and mediating between parties.

6. I expect that as my generation of donor conceived people ages there will only be an increase in the instances of serious medical complications, the knowledge of which will be of vital importance to our biological family members. The case of my good friend Narelle Grech is a poignant reminder of just how serious and important the outcome of this inquiry is.

7. I would like to stress however that this issue is much greater than one of needing medical information. It is about our natural desire and inalienable right to know our own identity and family. I remain unconvinced that there is any compelling argument explaining why we should have to wait any longer to obtain information of such fundamental importance.

8. This is a valuable opportunity for Victoria to make history in recognising that donor conceived people do have the right to know who they are and where they come from should they choose to do so. I sincerely hope that the committee takes the opportunity to effect change now and does not once again defer the issue.

9. I would like the opportunity to attend any public hearings related to this inquiry.

Yours Sincerely

Myfanwy Cummerford