

Subject: Adoption Amendment Bill 2013
Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations Committee SARC

Dear Members of SARC

We ask that SARC hold a half day public hearing into the Adoption Amendment Bill I am writing on behalf of Independent Regional Mothers to express our alarm that Adoption Amendments Bill 2013 has being presented to the Parliament which conflicts with the Senate recommendations 15 into Former Forced Adoption Policies and Practices and includes a further addition to the proposed amendment, As primary stackholders we had the full confidence in the Victorian Parliament they would not stray from Recommendation 15 ALL PARTIES.

Independent Regional Mothers along with Origins completely understand that the main objective is to provide for identifying information for natural parents about their adopted children (who are now all adults) as promised by the Premier at the Victorian Forced Adoption Apology on 25th October 2012.

We are strongly opposed to the Contact Statement which is discrimination as clearly defined in the Victorian Charter of Human Rights but more importantly Charters signed by our Nation. No legislation can give human rights to one group of people and not the other.

Natural mothers have fought since 1978 for identifying information - equal rights were recommended after the 1978-1982 inquiry that led to the 1984 Adoption Act - but unfortunately through 'politics' mothers were denied identifying information. Mothers are able to receive identifying information IF the adopted person agrees as the adoption acts stands now but to place a penalty of \$8000+ on mothers if they break the contact statement IS INDICATING MOTHERS ARE A THREAT AND POSSIBLE CRIMINALS.

During the 25th October 2012 apology it was stated that what happened to mothers was against civilisation and this amendment is following along the same lines we faced as far back as 1958.

Our Nation has progressed forwarded but now Victoria intend to step back into this uncivilised days and placing a penalty is a trigger of grief, trauma and pain but the former Premier during his apology stated IT WAS NOT YOUR FAULT - yet this amendment continues the punishment "to a group of naughty little girls".

Ted Baillieu when as Victorian Premier handing down his apology promised there would never be a repeat of the atrocities yet we are introducing recycled legislation that failed to protect a child in the past.

Mothers have the right to input into this amendment and the question that is important to be raised - why has Minister Woolridge gone against the Commonwealth Senate Recommendations?

We ask that you request a Public hearing with the proposed Adoption Amendments before it is debated in Parliament. Majority of Victorian mothers will be in Canberra for the March 21 National apology - so the Victorian timing for the amendment is questionable

Yours Sincerely

Brenda Coughlan
Spokesperson for Independent Regional Mothers