Mr Edward O'Donohue MLC, Chairperson, Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations Committee

Dear Sir,

I am a legally qualified medical practitioner working as a GP. I make the following submissions:

1. Medical practitioners to be allowed freedom of conscience and not be forced to perform abortions or refer women requesting abortion to another practitioner for this purpose.

2. I was surprised to find that in Victoria human life is considered to begin with separation from the mother. The foetus is human from the moment of conception and should not be regarded as "just a piece of tissue". This is what adolescents are told by those promoting abortion. I submit that the right to life of the unborn should be included in the Charter.

3. I know of cases where the foetus has been still living following and abortion and has been just left to die, or deliberately killed by suffocation. I submit that any foetus that is breathing following the abortion should be given the right to full and immediate medical attention to preserve its life.

4. During my long career as a GP I have dealt with many women who have had problems following an abortion. These include severe reactive depression, infection, haemorrhage, increased risk of developing breast cancer (mechanism now known), infertility. I have had an 86 year old patient suffering from guilt over an abortion she had at age 23 because her alcoholic husband was physically abusing her and their children. I submit that women should have the right to the full facts of the medical risks of abortion (not given by one promoting abortion).

5. There are those who are trying to give same sex couples equal rights with heterosexual couples including the right to adopt children, to use surrogate mothers, and for lesbians the right to in-vitro fertilisation. Children need a male and female role model, and need the approval and love of both a male and female parent for healthy development. I submit that all children be given the right to to have a normal family with a father and a mother.

Submitted by Dr Cerceeda G Hocking