

17 February 2021**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****saaac fears unnecessary and harmful amendments will undermine the purpose of the Termination of Pregnancy Bill 2020**

Yesterday Members of Parliament flagged proposed amendments that display a lack of trust in women and their health care professionals. Despite extensive rigorous research made available to all MPs, some have been persuaded by misinformation that distracts from the real issues facing patients and those providing abortion services.

These amendments include:

1. An amendment that seeks to further limit the circumstances in which abortion is accessible after 22 weeks and 6 days so it is only available to 'save a life' fails to show compassion to patients faced with a deeply personal decision in the context of a crisis pregnancy.
2. An amendment that removes the requirement of doctors with a conscientious objection to provide information to patients seeking abortion creates significant obstacles to accessing care for some, particularly young and vulnerable patients.
3. An amendment that requires doctors to rule out sex selection as a reason for a patient's request for an abortion would, through an unfair burden of investigation on doctors, lead to discriminatory behaviour towards some patients. As Democracy in Colour have written: *"Many migrant communities and communities of colour already experience reduced access to healthcare and treatment outcomes, and we fear such an amendment risks amplifying racial profiling and discrimination in our healthcare system"*.
4. An amendment requiring doctors to provide counselling information to every patient assumes that the patient does not have the capacity to make their own decisions about their health care.
5. An amendment that replaces the word 'person' with 'woman', fails to recognise the diversity of gender identifications in our community, including among those seeking abortions, and excludes some from the protection of the law.

saaac urges South Australian MPs to listen to the experts, resist these amendments to the current Bill and legislate in the interest of safe, compassionate and accessible abortion care.

Quotes attributable to Brigid Coombe (co-convenor of saaac):

Anti-abortionists are proposing amendments to this Bill that threaten to set back abortion care by half a century. We urge MPs not to be taken in by scare campaigns and misinformation. It's time to trust women and other patients, and trust doctors to make the best decisions in difficult circumstances.

Quotes attributable to Associate Professor Barbara Baird (co-convenor of saaac):

Parliamentarians should feel confident that the majority of South Australians will support those who support women and other patients to access the reproductive health services they need, when they need them. We urge them to pass the Bill without amendments.

**For media inquiries and further comments contact saaac via email:
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