

To all members of the South Australian House of Assembly,

As organisations and services working for the wellbeing of South Australians, we express our concern about the harm being caused by keeping abortion in the criminal law, and register our strong support for the current *Termination of Pregnancy Bill 2020*.

Each patient knows what makes sense for their health, their body and their future. They should be able to feel safe and in control of their healthcare, and be free to decide whether and when to have a child.

South Australia's current abortion laws are no longer fit for purpose. They delay and complicate patient care, increase patient distress, and disproportionately harm members of the community who already face barriers to accessing healthcare.

A patient who needs to end their pregnancy shouldn't have to travel hundreds of kilometres from home, or cross state borders, to access the healthcare they need. And healthcare professionals should be able to provide their patients with the best care possible – without fear of criminal charges.

We express our strong support for the *Termination of Pregnancy Bill 2020* in its current form. The Bill promotes the autonomy, dignity and wellbeing of patients who need to end a pregnancy - by providing a pathway to a more compassionate reproductive healthcare system for South Australians.

In particular, we note the profoundly personal and complex circumstances in which patients need abortion care later in pregnancy. Given this, we strongly support the approach outlined in the Bill, which enables patients and medical professionals to jointly make decisions about their healthcare needs after 22 weeks and 6 days in pregnancy. We consider the proposed Bill provides an approach that is both medically appropriate and compassionate for the patients facing these distressing circumstances.

We also support the provisions to ensure a health practitioner's personal beliefs don't interfere with their patient's access to timely abortion care.

We urge you to support the Bill, and to oppose any amendments. We are aware of proposed amendments that would create barriers to many patients accessing timely, appropriate and compassionate healthcare; particularly in regional and remote areas. Such amendments go against the expert advice of the South Australian Law Reform Institute, and major medical bodies. All South Australians should be able to access the healthcare they need; when they need it; and where they need it.

We call on you to be on the right side of history, and vote yes for the Bill - for safe, legal and compassionate access to abortion care in South Australia.

Sincerely,

Amnesty International Australia

Australian Education Union (SA Branch)

Australian Lawyers for Human Rights

Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation (SA Branch)

Australian Women Against Violence Alliance (AWAVA)

Australian Women's Health Network

Democracy in Colour

Embolden SA (Coalition of Women's Domestic Violence Services SA)

EMILY's List Australia

End Rape on Campus Australia

Fair Agenda

Family Planning Alliance Australia

Human Rights Law Centre

Marie Stopes Australia

National Alliance of Abortion and Pregnancy Options Counsellors (NAAPOC)

National Foundation for Australian Women

MS Health

Public Health Association of Australia

Rationalist Society of Australia

RANZCOG (Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists)

Rape and Domestic Violence Services Australia

Reproductive Choice Australia

South Australian Council of Social Service

SHINE SA

South Australian Abortion Action Coalition

South Australian Council for Civil Liberties

SPHERE - NHMRC Centre of Research Excellence in Sexual and Reproductive Health for Women in Primary Care

The National Council of Single Mothers & their Children Inc

The Women Lawyers Association of South Australia (Inc)

WESNET (The Women's Services Network)

Working Women's Centre SA inc

YWCA