



I'm with Both

ABORTION: Both a Legal Issue *and* a Health Issue

Health of the mother. **Health** of the unborn child.
Legal safety of the mother. **Legal** status of the unborn child.

When the Law Commission released their recommendations for changing the abortion laws (as per instruction from the Labour-led government), there were a number of disturbing issues:

- the Law Commission ignored the weight of submissions which **supported retaining abortion in the Crimes Act and giving legal rights to the unborn child**
- the three models for abortion law reform put forward by the Law Commission are clearly out of step with what New Zealanders want. The proposed models would **allow abortion up to birth** – and would **deregulate abortion providers** and their premises. There's nothing to protect women from being **coerced** into an abortion. Nothing to ensure your daughter's school can't take her for an **abortion without your knowledge**. Nothing to prevent a woman **aborting a girl because she wants a boy – or vice-versa**
- the Minister of Justice said, in response to concerns about the lack of safeguards for sex-selection abortions, women are "*quite capable of making these judgments themselves*"!

Politicians need to be quite sure that any attempts to remove the rights of the unborn child will be met with strong opposition.

We hope that you will 'lock arms' with us on this.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Please **read** the information in this pamphlet. Then **share** this information and knowledge with friends and family. **Ask your local MP** whether they will listen to the voices of families and protect the unborn children. Share this information on your social media.



For further information, go to
ChooseLife.org.nz/Review

**FAMILY
FIRST**
NEW ZEALAND

"I'm with both"

BRIEFING PAPER

New Zealanders don't want an extreme abortion law - they want a law that works best for women's health and well-being, and which considers *all* human beings involved in a pregnancy.

- ☑ A law that protects women from unlicensed premises and unregistered abortionists
- ☑ A law that promotes and facilitates informed consent
- ☑ A law that requires honest information about abortion-related risks be provided to pregnant women
- ☑ A law that provides women with independent pregnancy counselling
- ☑ A law that protects young pregnant girls by requiring parental involvement
- ☑ A law that limits the timeframe for having an abortion, except in exceptional circumstances
- ☑ A law that prevents abortions on the basis of gender
- ☑ A law that doesn't discriminate against disabled children e.g. those with Down syndrome

Women have a right to be fully informed

A just-published research review paper "*Abortion and the Physical and Mental Health of Women - A review of the evidence for health professionals*" reviews the international evidence to date about the relationship between abortion and the physical and mental health of women. It shows that abortion is associated with a wide range of adverse physical and psychological outcomes, and it is essential that women are made fully aware of all the risks. It concludes that while studies on abortion have sometimes yielded inconsistent results, there is a clear correlation between abortion and adverse psychological outcomes.

Women deserve to know this information so they can make a truly informed decision, as they should with any health decision.

Responding to arguments for changing the law

• ***'Changing the law is simply ratifying what's already happening'***

What is being proposed is not simply a case of ratifying current practice. Instead it would attempt to introduce a new and extreme abortion law in NZ (as suggested by ALRANZ) - a law that could result in the removal of safeguards for women, the introduction of late-term abortion, the loss of freedom of conscience for healthcare providers, and gender-selective abortions, among other things.

• ***'Women who have abortions shouldn't be criminals'***

This claim is simply false scaremongering aimed at deceiving people into supporting the introduction of an extreme abortion law in New Zealand. Any New Zealand woman who has an abortion under the current legislative guidelines and protections is not committing an illegal act and is therefore not considered a criminal by our current laws. **Women are not made criminals by the current legislative guidelines and protections.** The existing safeguards are there to protect women from unlicensed premises and coercion, and it is these safeguards most New Zealanders support.

• ***'There is no point in keeping abortion in the Crimes Act, it's a health issue'***

The current law recognises the scientific fact that there are at least two human beings involved in every pregnancy, and that abortion results in the loss of one of those lives. The current legal framework attempts to strike a balance between the wellbeing of the mother, and the fact that the deliberate taking of any innocent human life is a crime that must be safeguarded against.

And yes, abortion is *also* a health issue - it's a surgical procedure that has some serious risk factors associated with it. A sound law needs to reflect that reality, and not leave women exposed to harms, such as those recently witnessed in the criminal trial of US abortionist Kermit Gosnell who was able to operate a dangerous but legal abortion facility which resulted in female client death and other atrocities thanks to extreme abortion laws. **Criminal consequences for abortion providers who break the law should remain, in order to better protect all the parties involved.**

For further information, go to
ChooseLife.org.nz/Review

- ***‘It’s a matter between a woman and her doctor’***

There are at least two human beings involved in every pregnancy, and that’s why we place such a strong emphasis on campaigns which discourage smoking or drinking during pregnancy in this country. It’s also why, if it is needed, doctors conduct life-saving surgery while a child is in utero.

Any responsible doctor knows that they are dealing with at least two patients that need care every time a pregnant woman comes under their supervision, and any responsible law should also do the same.

- ***‘Women currently have to jump through hoops to get an abortion’***

The system currently puts basic legal safeguards in place. Even the Abortion Supervisory Committee (ASC), in its latest report to Parliament, notes that, *“The ASC recognises the merit in having a robust pathway in place, which requires certifying consultants to assess and certify patients and to ensure counselling is offered.”* If there truly are issues with these current safeguards, then addressing those areas, and not introducing an extreme abortion law, is the correct way to fix any deficiencies.

- ***‘Women must have control over their own bodies’***

New Zealand women need to be informed of the effects that abortion can have on their bodies, and the current law needs to be strengthened to ensure that informed consent from an independent provider is a legal requirement.

There are at least two *bodies* in every pregnancy: the body of the mother and the body of the unborn human being. If we truly believe that women must have control over their bodies, then surely *unborn* women deserve the right to their bodies too?

- ***‘Women deserve the right to choose’***

Yes, *all* women deserve the right to choose, *including* the unborn little girl’s right to grow up and make choices.

Women should have the right to choose – their maternity care provider, their midwife, their doctor, the type of birth they want, etc – but abortion is something completely different altogether. Abortion is the choice to end the life of another human being.

The question of choice is far more complex than the way it is often portrayed in the abortion debate. The law, in general, doesn’t recognise personal choice as an absolute without limits; it always restricts choice when it conflicts with the wellbeing of others. In the case of abortion, those ‘others’ are the unborn human beings who will be robbed of ALL their choices if they are aborted.

A real choice is one that is fully informed; about all the risks, about all the options, about foetal development, and about what the abortion procedure actually entails.

- ***‘Private decisions like abortion shouldn’t be the government’s business’***

All of us have a stake in what happens to the most vulnerable members of our community and to their mothers, so we should all care about what shape our laws take when it comes to abortion.

- ***‘Every child needs to be loved and wanted’***

Children need to be accepted and loved because they are valuable, regardless of whether or not they were ‘planned’.

A so-called ‘wanted child’ is no more special or valuable than a child that has parents who are too afraid or unsure to ‘want’ that child right now. The ultimate act of love is to give life to a child. There is also no shortage of loving Kiwi couples who would jump at the chance to adopt and love any so-called ‘unwanted children’ in this country.

- ***‘What about cases of pregnancy resulting from rape or incest, or where there are foetal abnormalities?’***

Extreme violence has been committed against any woman pregnant from rape or incest. They deserve to be treated with the deepest compassion and given enormous support and care.

However, the circumstances of the baby’s conception change nothing about the baby herself, or the violent nature of abortion. So often when this issue is raised, people refer to the unborn child as if she is an extension of the rapist, or his vile act, completely forgetting that in actual fact the child is her own unique person quite independently of the tragic circumstances of her conception. The child is just as much an extension of the mother. Adding abortion after rape simply adds violence to violence, creating a second victim of the rapist – the unborn child.

Many women who have kept a child conceived in rape tell a common story of finding a silver lining of love in an otherwise very dark situation. Women who keep their babies also avoid the serious psychological risks associated with abortion, which, according to some experts, could be amplified even further when added to the already horrific trauma of sexual assault.

- **‘What about cases of foetal abnormalities?’**

Aborting a child because of possible abnormality is nothing less than blatant discrimination against people with disabilities. When reflecting on this argument we need to tear aside the veil of prejudice that drives the notion that it is somehow kinder to kill a person with a disability or a disease before she is born than to let her ‘live in that condition.’ Shockingly, the types of disabilities included by pro-abortionists in the list of purportedly ‘good reasons’ for an abortion range from the truly severe to relatively minor; the latter part of the list grows lengthier every year. Abortion is becoming a search-and-destroy method for eliminating less-than-perfect people.

In jurisdictions that have decriminalised abortion – China, Vietnam, Canada and two states in Australia – gestational time limits for disability-selective abortions have been removed and abortion for babies with disabilities is available right up to birth. The report on Iceland and their near 100% abortion rate from Down syndrome has led to global controversy regarding equality and non-discrimination for people with disabilities.

Abortion numbers are dropping – that’s a good thing!

Everyone is welcoming the drop in the number of abortions – the lowest rate in over 25 years.

The rate will continue to drop as knowledge of the prenatal development of the unborn child increases, and as an increasingly pro-life younger generation become parents themselves.

The ‘bunch of cells’ argument which has driven the right-to-abortion argument is simply flat-earth science. 3-D ultrasounds and smartphone apps allowing parents to listen to the heartbeat of their unborn child and keep track of their baby’s progress in the womb, including heartbeats per minute, the number of times the baby kicks and the weight of the growing foetus, have contributed to an increasing awareness of the life of the child in the womb.

What do New Zealanders really think?

According to an independent poll of 1013 New Zealanders in December 2017, just 9% support the current legal limit for an abortion of up to 20 weeks. Only 4% believe it should be *later* than 20 weeks (including up to birth), as proposed by pro-abortion group ALRANZ. 50% think the time limit should be *shorter* than the current 20 weeks, and a further 36% are unsure. Of those who do pick a time limit, 15 weeks is the median choice.

Significantly, 56% of women think the time limit should be *less* than the current 20 weeks. And incredibly, 53% of those who generally *support* abortion think the time limit should be less than the current 20 weeks - 29% of abortion supporters say *10 weeks or less*.

And a poll in 2019 found that almost half of those surveyed believe that **a foetus should have human rights and be legally protected once a heartbeat can be detected** (only 29% disagree). It also found that one in three respondents (36%) believe that **life begins at conception**, a further 9% in the first three months, and just 18% think it is when the child is born, as argued by some abortion advocates.

Babies Have Heartbeats
Follow your heart



For further information, go to
ChooseLife.org.nz/Review

