

The Program Manager
Reproductive Technology Unit
Patient Safety & Clinical Quality
Clinical Excellence Division
Department of Health
189 Royal Street
PERTH WA 6004

14 March 2018

To the Program Manager

RE: Review of the Western Australian *Human Reproductive Technology Act 1991* and the *Surrogacy Act 2008*

This is an individual submission. Please could my personal information (home address, mobile phone number and personal email) remain private and confidential.

Like many people, growing up I always assumed I would become a parent. As a gay man, however, my options for becoming one are limited in Western Australia. It is not impossible but to go down the surrogacy route is extremely difficult, costly and comes with needless risk.

I was married in Canada in 2014 to my Australian partner of ten years. While living in Canada, we were surrounded by gay friends who had chosen to become parents through surrogacy. In Australia, though less common, friends have also had children through surrogacy, mostly through commercial surrogacy operations in the US, India and Thailand. The anxiety that this causes is plain to see, especially in countries where surrogacy for gay parents is a grey area.

The fact is people want to have children, and those who go through the massive undertaking of surrogacy do not do so lightly. Their children are wanted and loved, so it should not have to be that they suffer fear of persecution and prosecution during what should be a celebrated and happy time. (There is enough stress during pregnancy and after birth for that as it is.)

I am for the establishment of commercial surrogacy arrangements in Western Australia (and Australia wide if it were possible). The system currently in place in the United States is one of (if not) the best and ensures rights for intended parents, surrogates and the child/children. It is a system where exploitation is nearly impossible, it is highly regulated and safe.

In addition, the laws around altruistic surrogacy should be broadened to allow "eligible couple" and "eligible person to include male same-sex couples or single men. This would make the law equal, especially considering the change to the Marriage Act last year.

I urge the review to consider the practical reality that many people, no matter if they are gay or straight, have a strong desire and need to become parents and they will go to extraordinary lengths to do so. To do so in their home state makes sense and can only make for a more inclusive, respectful, and supportive society.

Regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D Scarparolo". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "D" and a stylized "S".

Daniel Scarparolo

[ADDRESS AND PRIVATE DETAILS REDACTED]