[redacted]

24th July, 2025

The Commissioner
Australian Law Reform Commission
PO Box 209
Flinders Lane
Victoria 8009
Email: surrogacy@alrc.gov.au

Dear Commissioner,

SUBMISSION TO THE AUSTRALIAN LAW REFORM COMMISSION – REVIEW OF AUSTRALIA'S SURROGACY LAWS

I am making this submission to contribute to the Australian Law Reform Commission's review of Australia's surrogacy laws. I am a surrogate and recently in [redacted] 2025 I gave birth to a surrogate baby.

I have read the Issues Paper and have responded to the questions posed in the paper below.

I seek that my submission be published but de-identified.

Question1 - About Me and My Personal Experience

My name is [redacted] and I am a [redacted]. I am happily married to my husband [redacted] and we have two children together aged 3 and 4. I am an extremely driven and motivated person who works fulltime as a Practice Manager in the [redacted] Day to day, I manage and lead a team of 45 extraordinary staff members in between running a busy household and being a parent.

Over the last two and a half years I have been on a surrogacy journey and recently in [redacted] 2025, I gave birth to my surrogate baby. My surrogacy experience was deeply meaningful, empowering and rewarding. And I can honestly say it was one of the best things I have ever done or will do in my life.

Becoming a surrogate was a personal ambition that originated during my own journey to parenthood. As a woman, being able to fall pregnant and start a family is often taken for granted, but also met with fear, uncertainty and a fertility timeframe. My husband and I were an extremely fortunate couple as we were able to conceive naturally and I was able to carry two successful pregnancies, giving life to our two children. However, as I navigated the world of fertility, I found myself surrounded by other women and couples who were desperate to have children of their own but battled with a wide range of infertility challenges. This included my

brother-in-law and his wife who had pursued international surrogacy in America to bring their first-born child into the world.

After my husband and I decided that we were finished having children of our own, I knew that I was physically and mentally capable of taking on another pregnancy and thought I could do it for someone else. So, I endeavoured to take on this challenge and become a surrogate in Australia.

When beginning my research into altruistic surrogacy in Australia, I discovered just how complex and challenging the process would be. Navigating the legal system, finding reputable resources of information about surrogacy, engaging 'qualified' persons and building a support system outside of my direct family and friends' network was extremely time consuming and challenging.

I explored joining a 'matching' service, Surrogacy Australia, who claimed to help find surrogates with intended parents. However, I was shocked to discover the service was unregulated, charged exorbitant fees to intended parents and had a very low success rate. So consequently, I did not complete my membership application with them.

As it was illegal for me to advertise becoming a surrogate, I looked to social media platforms for guidance. I was surprised to discover that a large portion of the surrogate community in Australia often resorted to these online forums to share information, resources and find opposite parties for surrogacy arrangements (intended parents and surrogates). However, I found these groups were one of the best sources of information and I was able to hear about first hand experiences of others' surrogacy experiences and it helped guide me to other resources that I would need on my own journey, including my surrogacy lawyer, [redacted].

After many discussions with my husband, we decided that I should try and find intended parents within our direct family and friend's network. But more specifically, we wanted to approach my brother-in-law and his wife first, to see if they were interested in expanding their family, knowing that they required a surrogate to have their first child. In January, 2023 at a family catch-up, I formally offered to become a surrogate for them.

After the initial offer to become a surrogate for them, I became quite focussed and motivated to take on the surrogacy and I began planning the next steps. It was my belief that I somewhat surprised them with my initial offer as they had closed to the door to a domestic and altruistic arrangement previously and there were many things they had to consider before accepting. However, due to the genuineness of my offer and how seriously I presented my understanding of surrogacy in Australia, the discussions with them continued. We eventually progressed to the next stage of surrogacy and began approaching doctors, lawyers and counsellors. Having gone through an international surrogacy arrangement before in America, my brother-in-law and his wife had experienced a very different surrogacy experience and we had to navigate how this would work with me, domestically and altruistically in Australia. We also had other logistical arrangements to make including having their remaining embryos delivered back to Australia, as they were being stored overseas at the time.

Over the next two years, we followed the altruistic surrogacy process and ticked off the many legislative requirements. As I reside in [redacted] and was 400km away from my fertility specialist and intended parents, this created a few more geographical challenges than others may have experienced. I had to travel (often without my family) to attend appointments with my fertility doctors and the large wait times were at times challenging and frustrating to navigate. We were lucky to find surrogacy counsellors who were willing to conduct appointments via telehealth, to fulfil our pre-surrogacy guidance report requirements, but we often had to wait weeks or months to obtain an appointment. This was also true for accessing

and liaising with our surrogacy lawyers to have our initial appointments and have our surrogacy agreements drawn up and finalised.

Once we were approved and signed off by all parties, I was able to start medical treatment and I began IVF in August 2024 (20 months after starting the journey). The IVF process was an emotionally, mentally and physically taxing process that was incredibly challenging. Managing multiple medications, hormones, injections, blood tests, ultrasounds and appointments all within strict timeframes was difficult and time consuming. I travelled by car to and from my specialist (800km each journey) several times over this period to ensure the best results. In total, I underwent two and a half IVF cycles and fortunately after my second embryo transfer on the [redacted] 2024, I fell pregnant.

Although I was never out of pocket financially (having all my medical, travel and time off work expenses paid by intended parents), my time and energy was taken away from my husband, children, family, friends and often my work. And this not only applied to the time spent undergoing IVF, but also during the pre-surrogacy planning, pregnancy, post-partum recovery and post-surrogacy journey.

I was fortunate again, to have a relatively uncomplicated and successful pregnancy. In [redacted] 2025, I gave birth to my niece via caesarean at our local hospital. It was one of the most joyous days I have ever experienced. All of the hospital staff, doctors, nurses and all of our family and friends were incredibly moved by our journey and it was clear that her birth was beyond special, positively impacting our entire community. I feel a sense of accomplishment unlike no other and I was (and still am) empowered by the whole experience. It also fulfilled my sense of purpose and will be written into my family legacy.

As I write this submission, I am still recovering physically from my caesarean surgery and we are currently fulfilling all the post-surrogacy legislative requirements to get my surrogate baby's parentage changed over to her true parents. Although I don't have a newborn to care for, this process has taken more energy and time away from my recovery and family. The same could be said for writing this submission. However, I honestly believe that surrogacy in Australia could be drastically improved and if I can contribute to making this process easier, more accessible and streamlined for the next generation of surrogates and intended families to come, writing this submission is just as important as the journey I went on.

Question 2 - What reform principles should lead this Inquiry?

The reform of Australia's surrogacy laws must be guided by principles that place the best interests of the child as the central consideration, while also upholding the autonomy and dignity of all parties involved, particularly surrogates. It is my belief that Australia has one of the best and safest health care systems in the world and more babies should be born here, including babies born via surrogacy. However, surrogacy in Australia must become more accessible to all Australians, be recognised as a legal and legitimate birthing practice, be included in health funding protocols (including Medicare and Centrelink), and have its legal framework overhauled to ensure the protections of the surrogate child, surrogate and intended parents. Reforms should consider the lived experiences of recent domestic and international surrogacy arrangements, provide a domestic alternative to international commercial surrogacy, acknowledge the legitimacy of all Australian families (free from all forms of discrimination) and provide a uniform and nationally consistent framework (ensuring accessibility rights across the whole country).

Question 3 – Human Rights in Surrogacy

Surrogacy raises several significant human rights issues. At the forefront, is the right of a surrogate to exercise full autonomy over her body and reproductive decisions. This was something I was grateful to experience during my journey. Any future surrogacy framework must ensure that participation is entirely voluntary and informed by all parties, with strong protections against coercion or exploitation.

Children born via surrogacy also have the right to know their origins, which contributes to their sense of identity. They are and should always be entitled to information about their birth, genetic background, and the identities of all parties involved if born via surrogacy. My surrogate baby will grow up knowing the true behind her birth story and this should be safeguarded for all surrogate babies in Australia, so their identity is never in doubt.

Furthermore, I believe access to surrogacy must not be restricted based on sexual orientation, gender identity, relationship status, or socioeconomic circumstances. Individual state-based laws can be difficult for families to navigate and often discourages them from pursing surrogacy across borders or within Australia. These issues should be addressed through inclusive, rights-affirming laws that are consistent across all jurisdictions.

Question 4 – Access to Birth Information

I believe that children born through surrogacy should have access to comprehensive and truthful information about the circumstances of their birth, including the identities of the surrogate and any donors involved. This information should be available through a national surrogacy register that is accessible once the child reaches a suitable age or developmental stage. However, ideally intended parents should always be encouraged to share the details of their child's birth freely and truthfully. Mechanisms must also be in place to support children and their families in accessing this information in a manner that is psychologically safe and respectful. This includes promoting and employing counselling services and support for families in facilitating open conversations about surrogacy origins.

Question 5 – Barriers to Domestic Surrogacy

I believe that several barriers deter people from engaging in domestic surrogacy arrangements in Australia and this was the lived experience of my intended parents.

The legal system - The current legal system in place for surrogacy in Australia is complex, confusing and difficult to interpret across jurisdictions. The lack of a national legal framework continues to be an issue for many people seeking surrogacy arrangements.

Demand for a surrogate – With only 100-130 babies born via surrogacy in Australia every year, the demand is high and the surrogate supply is very low. Furthermore, through discussions I experienced along my journey, I believe people are fearful and uninformed about surrogacy in Australia. This continues to be a reason why families prefer to seek surrogacy overseas (even at greater risk) and enter commercial agreements, rather than seek a domestic arrangement.

Advertising and how to find a surrogate using safe and legitimate sources – The legislation surrounding advertising for surrogacy has a large impact on surrogacy in Australia. Had I not found intended parents within my own network, any other legal and legitimate avenues for finding a family to help, were severely limited. As mentioned there are 'matching services' in Australia that promote being able to match surrogates with intended parents but they are not regulated, charge exorbitant fees to members and have very low success rates. The next best option is social media groups which can be difficult to determine 'legitimate' families from the

scam artists and online predators which can infiltrate these pages. Information is often shared freely and based on people's own opinions and experiences, rather than reputable resources.

Financial constraints - Financial constraints are also a significant barrier, when it comes to the costs associated with surrogacy (medical, legal, and counselling etc). The expenses can mount up quickly particularly if surrogates are located in different jurisdictions to their intended families or specialists (as was in my case). It is my belief that only medium to high earning families can currently afford surrogacy in Australia. Surrogacy remains out of reach for people who are financially disadvantaged included those of low socio-economic status. The cost of gestational surrogacy requires fertility treatment by medical specialists which does not have any public funding support – this is a huge barrier when considering accessibility. Particularly when you consider that surrogates may require more than one cycle of IVF, these medical costs can be well into the tens of thousands of dollars alone.

Cost and access to other require services by qualified professionals – Meeting the legal and counselling requirements for surrogacy is also costly, limited to niche practitioners and often comes with long wait times. The mandatory counselling sessions alone as part of my surrogacy arrangement totalled over $5000 (pre and post surrogacy reporting). It would be helpful if access to counselling/psychology for surrogacy could also be subsidised under government funding schemes. Educating and promoting more practitioners to work in the surrogacy space would be beneficial to reforming the system in Australia.

Access to leave and government funding – As a surrogate it was at often times challenging for myself and my husband to access leave from our employers for IVF, pregnancy, birth and post-birth recovery. I was fortunate to have a very understanding and supportive employer who was willing to give me leave and I was able to access Centrelink relatively easy. However, my partner (even though legally the birth father) found it incredibly difficult to access leave from his employer as no policy existed that encompassed our arrangement.

Eligibility requirements – The requirements placed on both intended parents and surrogates severely impacts on who can enter into a surrogacy arrangement in Australia. Proposed changes are discussed in more detail below.

To address these barriers, reforms must introduce national consistency, remove discriminatory eligibility criteria, provide accessible and publicly funded support services and; educate and increase the number of specialists/practitioners required for surrogacy in Australia.

Questions 6 and 7 – Eligibility Requirements for Surrogacy

Eligibility requirements are appropriate and necessary to ensure the safety and integrity of surrogacy arrangements and all people involved (including the child). These should include assessments of capacity, physical and mental health, and a genuine commitment to entering the process in good faith. However, eligibility must not be defined in a manner that excludes people based on outdated or prejudicial notions of what constitutes a family in modern Australia. Eligibility should include the ability of intended parents to provide a safe, loving, and stable environment for a child which should include single parents and same sex couples.

Due to the high demand of surrogates in Australia, I do believe that surrogacy should be excluded in some circumstances to prevent further clogging of the already highly demanded system. Surrogacy should be excluded in cases where a person is medically and psychologically capable of carrying a child but seeks surrogacy for reasons of convenience, lifestyle, or avoidance of physical impacts of pregnancy. Surrogacy is a significant commitment for any surrogate and should only be permitted when gestation by the intending parent(s) is not a safe or viable option (to be determined by qualified medical practitioners). There should be a

national guideline for medical practitioners to follow about eligibility to ensure safety and consistency in the future system.

Some current eligibility requirements for surrogates and intended parents should also be reassessed under the surrogacy legislation. I propose that all restrictions including age and previous pregnancy experience be able to be waived if a qualified medical practitioner deems them eligible.

Questions 8 and 9 – Validity and Enforceability of Surrogacy Agreements

A surrogacy agreement is vital and important in any surrogacy arrangement in Australia. I believe that they need to protect a surrogate's autonomy during pregnancy and birth, ensure all expenses are recovered but also protect the child's best interests. However there needs to be consistent national guideline for families and lawyers to follow when writing and enforcing these agreements. Any enforceable surrogacy framework must prioritise the surrogate's rights and the child's welfare over the interests of intended parents.

When I was first given my draft surrogacy agreement I was completely outraged by some of the wording and clauses used. There were clauses that stated I had to waive my right to privacy and confidentiality during my medical treatments, abstain from hazardous sex during pregnancy as well as being liable for all costs if the baby died from my own 'wanton recklessness'. There were also many clauses which stipulated what I could and could not do during pregnancy including getting my hair died, using some cleaning products and a whole list of foods I was not allowed to eat. It felt overtly controlling and like I had to give up by bodily autonomy for the surrogacy process. The surrogacy agreement particulars were an unnecessary source of contention between myself and my intended parents, making me feel like I was not to be trusted to carry a pregnancy. However, in the end I was encouraged by lawyer to not let it cause conflict and I was comforted to know that it was not legally enforceable. In my experience the surrogacy agreement did not have to contain such matter and any future surrogacy agreements should be based on a national template the enforces the protections of all parties but protects a surrogate's autonomy.

As a surrogate, it was never my intention to become a parent, I merely wanted to carry a pregnancy and birth a baby for someone else. I did not want to be considered the 'legal parent' of my surrogate baby and I would have preferred an arrangement where I was never listed as such (including on the original birth certificate). Once I had my surrogate baby, care was given to the intended parents including all of the parental decisions surrounding her care. However, the right to consent to her ongoing healthcare should also have been transferred to them at the same time. We experienced some confusion at the hospital as to who signs what forms and many of the staff had no experience with a surrogacy arrangement. Luckily, they were all extremely supportive and our overall experience and interactions with them were extremely positive. However, it is clear that even medical personnel require more education and training surrounding surrogacy arrangements and the affiliated legislation that affects these areas.

It was also strange and confronting to receive a birth certificate with myself and my husband listed as the birth parents and my children listed as her brother and sister. It has also been difficult to get my surrogate baby listed under Medicare since her birth.

As a surrogate recovering from a caesarean section surgery, the requirements post birth (signing affidavits, counselling, consulting with lawyers and attending court) have seemed excessive and sometimes un-necessary. Though we have all begrudgingly persevered with fulfilling all the requirements post-birth, it has been particularly difficult for my intended parents to manage all of this, whilst looking after a newborn.

A system where all of the post-birth confusion could be avoided is paramount to protecting all future surrogates (and their families), surrogate children and intended families. One possible solution to all of these issues is outlined by surrogacy lawyer, Sarah Jefford, whereby a pre-birth parentage order is arranged, where the intended parents are presumed legal parents unless the surrogate formally objects. The birth certificate should be issued directly into the intended parents names and all parental rights should be theirs from the moment the surrogate baby is born.

Question 10 – Process Requirements

The process for surrogacy arrangements must be robust, comprehensive and consistent across Australia. I agree that seeking legal advice and counselling should remain compulsory for all parties before entering into any agreement, to ensure all surrogates and intended parents are entering for true and genuine reasons, free from coercion. Documentation of these sessions should continue to be required as part of the parentage application process.

Counselling should also be available after the birth of the child to support the emotional wellbeing of both surrogates (and their partners) and intended parents as they navigate their respective transitions.

Post-birth, I believe the legal and counselling requirements should be reviewed and condensed as mentioned previously via a pre-birth parentage process.

Questions 11 and 12 – Professional Services

Currently, there are significant gaps in the availability and accessibility of legal and counselling services for surrogacy. Many professionals lack the necessary training and understanding of the unique emotional, legal, and ethical complexities involved. There is also a lack of regulated surrogacy agencies in Australia, which contributes to difficulties in matching surrogates with intended parents. I believe professional services should meet national qualification standards, be nationally regulated, inclusive, and culturally competent. They should ideally operate as not-for-profit or publicly funded entities to avoid commercial pressures that might compromise ethical standards. Legal, counselling, and medical services should collaborate while maintaining clear independence to preserve impartiality, particularly within the counselling aspects of the processes.

Question 13 – Advertising

Advertising for a surrogate or intended parent should be permitted in Australia, however media reporting should be restricted and regulated. As a surrogate, removing the prohibitions on being able to advertise and being able to do so within a safe and legitimate source would have been helpful at the start of my journey.

I believe that there is a negative stigma associated with surrogacy currently in Australia and more often than not, media content portrays negative experiences. In future, only certified or accredited agencies and professionals should be allowed to advertise and report on surrogacy. Content should be factual, ethical, and non-exploitative, avoiding language that commercialises the process or objectifies surrogates. Advertising should be permitted through official registers, health services, and approved social platforms, ensuring accessibility while maintaining appropriate oversight and public trust. I would love to see more educational campaigns promoting safe surrogacy practices in Australia as well as more successful stories to overcome the taboo cloud that surrounds surrogacy.

Question 14 – Medicare and Parental Leave

Surrogates and intended parents should be entitled to appropriate government support similar to other pregnancies and births in Australia. Introducing Medicare rebates for surrogate fertility treatments would go a long way to reduce the financial strain on intended parents and encourage more surrogacy births in Australia.

Centrelink processes should also be reviewed to ensure all parties involved (surrogates, surrogate partners and intended parents) have access to appropriate paid parental leave. Setting this national precedent will go a long way for private companies and businesses to recognise the legitimacy of surrogacy agreements and include the leave entitlements in their own internal policies and procedures.

All surrogates (and their partners) and intended parents should also be supported with flexible leave arrangements that accommodate the uncertain timing of the child's arrival.

Question 15 – Reimbursement of Expenses

The current approach to reimbursing surrogates is inconsistent and confusing. In my experience as a surrogate, there were often times where I felt I needed to ask permission, justify or felt guilty purchasing some pregnancy related items/expenses. Maintaining a strong relationship with my intended parents throughout and after the surrogacy was extremely important to me, and I did not want any financial conflicts jeopardises us. I kept meticulous records, recording all expenses and providing matching receipts. At the beginning, I believed our surrogacy agreement outlined a sound expense list (though I was put off by some of the amount limits) and my intended parents were always very accommodating with their financial support. But despite all of this, sometimes I felt it was just easier if I paid for things myself. Therefore, I believe that there could be significant changes in this space to ensure future surrogacy arrangements don't feel the financial constraints like I did.

During my surrogacy experience, I was given access to a card (to an account held in the names of the intended parents) in which I could use to directly pay for any surrogacy expenses. However, I was only given this card after the surrogacy agreement was signed and relied on the trust of the intended parents to reimburse me for any previous expenses. I also could not access the account easily to reimburse myself for lost wages. Though not caused by ill intentions of the intended parents, sometimes there were time delays in receiving the reimbursed funds. Prior to falling pregnant with my surrogate baby, it was also difficult to predict what expenses I or my partner/children (particularly childcare) would require. Even though I had carried and birthed two children of my own, my surrogacy pregnancy was different again. One such expense we didn't account for was psychological support for my partner after birth, which was not included in the agreement.

Introducing a national guideline, framework and template would be helpful to determine what constitutes a reimbursable expense. In my experience, having a third party involved such a trust structure may have been helpful for organising and reimbursing expenses and eliminate any financial strain on the surrogacy relationship. These recommendations would help eliminate surrogate's feelings of guilt or justification, protect intended parents from expense related exploitation and provide a nationally consistent process.

Questions 16 and 17 – Compensated or Commercial Surrogacy

I am heavily in support of altruistic motivations remaining at the forefront of Australian surrogacy. I entered surrogacy because of a core desire to help bring a baby into the world for

someone/a couple that experienced infertility issues and couldn't conceive or carry a pregnancy and; because I believed that I would be able to physically and mentally take on a surrogacy journey and; because I believe that more babies should be born via surrogacy in Australia. I was never motivated by money. However, my journey (still ongoing) has taken over two and half years. It has taken time away from my family, my friends and my work. I have sacrificed many things and although my surrogate baby was 1000 percent worth it, I have to consider that people like me, willing to go through the current altruistic system, are rare. And if we want intended parents to stop going overseas to start/complete their families and safeguard the families and children within our nation's borders, we have to change the system. Therefore, I am in support of allowing future compensated surrogacy in Australia.

Compensated surrogacy should be supported under a regulated framework that permits reasonable, capped compensation for a surrogate's time, effort, and inconvenience, distinct from commercial surrogacy which involves profit-making. I believe commercial surrogacy should remain prohibited due to ethical concerns and risks of exploitation. I also believe that compensated surrogacy would be easier to sway in public opinion which is important if we are going to attract more women to act as surrogates, combat the fear and taboo surrounding surrogacy and formally legitimise the process in the eye of the public. If compensation is introduced, it should be set by an independent regulatory authority, capped, and disbursed through a transparent and staged process held in trust. It would also need to be heavily regulated by a governing authority.

Questions 18 and 19 – Legal Parentage

I found the process for obtaining legal parentage for my surrogate baby in Australia problematic and I believe it is one of the core reasons why intended parents seek overseas surrogacy. The fear that the surrogate will not release the child or that the intended parents won't take the child is a genuine fear instilled within the surrogate community. Though I felt more safeguarded after going through all of the pre-surrogacy requirements, it was still a confronting and gruelling process to go through post-birth. I believe that the process to transfer parentage post-birth, prolongs the legal uncertainty for the surrogate child (and intended parents) and unnecessarily places more responsibility on the surrogate and her family. I would be supportive of reforms that introduce a pre-birth process for transferring parentage where all parties have complied with legal and counselling requirements. Automatic recognition of intended parents in compliant domestic surrogacy arrangements should reflect the reality of intent and planning behind such arrangements. Equality between intended mothers and intended fathers in legal parentage determinations should always be upheld in conjunction with anti-discrimination laws. Parentage should never depend on genetic connection alone and the best interests of the child should remain at the forefront of any reform.

Questions 20 and 21 – Citizenship and Immigration

Due to the nature of my domestic surrogacy experience, I do not feel like I can comment on these topics.

Questions 22 and 23 – Oversight and Harmonisation

The current system of state and territory surrogacy laws is confusing, inconsistent and inequal. Creating a uniform, national framework is essential to any law reform. It is my belief that surrogacy should be regulated at the federal level, with consistent rules on eligibility, parentage, compensation, and enforcement. A national administrative body or tribunal should oversee compliance, regulate the system, manage a national surrogacy register, and support/educate families and professionals throughout the process. While delivery of some services could remain state-based, standards must be harmonised across Australia to protect all parties and reduce legal inconsistencies.

Question 24 – Role of Criminal Law
Criminal law should be used sparingly in the regulation of surrogacy and only where necessary to prevent harm, such as cases involving coercion, trafficking, or the exploitation of vulnerable people. Blanket criminalisation of international or compensated surrogacy arrangements often leads to families pursuing these pathways in secrecy and creates public taboo surrounding surrogacy.

Question 25 – Awareness and Education
There is a critical need to improve public and professional awareness of surrogacy laws and processes. Throughout my own surrogacy journey, when people found out I was a surrogate, many people wanted to learn more and curiously questioned the processes involved. Many people made comments such as 'I thought surrogacy was illegal in Australia'. It opened a whole new dialogue within my network and community and I was shocked to hear, particularly from women, who were experiencing fertility issues and were exploring the various options of how they could start or complete their families. Many believed that domestic or international surrogacy was not an accessible or viable option for them. In my [redacted] community, it is my understanding that I was only the second person to give birth at my hospital as a surrogate. Furthermore, my fertility specialist reported that they have only had a total of six surrogate arrangements through their practice.

Positive education campaigns that promote safe surrogacy practices in Australia would go a long way to open the conversations surrounding surrogacy. I want to see more surrogate babies born safely in Australia and to do this we require public education campaigns, increased training and awareness for all professionals involved and the creation of a centralised, unbiased and regulated resource platform where people can gather information and guidance for surrogacy in Australia.

Questions 26 and 27 – Other Insights

The ALRC Issues Paper addresses most of the key concerns of surrogacy in Australia. However, I am a big advocate for evidence-based research and by promoting more research into the lived experiences of past, current and future Australian surrogacy arrangements, we can gather information to innovate and adapt processes in future. Establishing a national surrogacy register that integrates data collection and research will help ensure that modern laws are evidence-based and responsive to the needs of future Australian families.

Conclusion
Australia is at a pivotal moment in reforming surrogacy laws. By embedding principles that promote nationally consistent standards, uphold human rights for children, protect intended families and safeguard a surrogates' right to bodily autonomy, we can create a system that is ethical, inclusive, and sustainable. Drawing on the expertise of practitioners and the lived experiences of those directly impacted by surrogacy laws, we must prioritise compassionate, pragmatic, and modern legislation that encourages more babies to be born safely via surrogacy, in Australia.

Thank you for considering my submission.

With Kind Regards,

[redacted]