From: [redacted]
To: Surrogacy
Subject: Surrogacy submission
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To whom it may concern,

I would like to voice my personal opposition to the proposed reforms to the Australian surrogacy legislation.

While I have personally experienced being in a relationship that my then partner was unable to have children, I have since remarried and been blessed with 3 naturally since.

My experience revealed to me the both the heartache at the time but also upon reflection, the selfishness of wanting something that would seemingly bring fulfilment – namely a child.

Working through both of these aspects was a difficult yet necessary component of my life's journey.

Here in Australia we have the capacity to offer ways around this, either through adoption, IVF or in the case of current legislation – limiting very carefully the use of surrogacy access.

I believe that surrogacy is the most inappropriate form of becoming a parent as it treats the child as a commodity that is able to be bought and sold using various terminology to supposedly sanitise the process.

I have recently read several articles that site several areas of concern for not allowing the practice:

- Australia should prohibit all forms of surrogacy, including cross-border arrangements, particularly commercial surrogacy.
- The law should affirm that the welfare and rights of the child are paramount and cannot be overridden by adult desires or contracts. This should include the right of any children born through surrogacy to know their biological parents and the circumstances of the conception and birth.
- Where surrogacy does occur, legal frameworks must provide rigorous protections for surrogate mothers, including independent legal and psychological support. There should also be strong protections to ensure they are not subject to modern slavery arrangements.
- Commercial surrogacy is currently illegal in Australia for very good reasons. The question has been reviewed multiple times with the same result. It is fundamentally incompatible with Australia's international human rights obligations under the CRC (particularly Article 35) and the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) to introduce either compensated or commercial surrogacy. The only difference between the two terms, as established by the Issues Paper, is that there is a cap set on

compensated surrogacy. Both involve the commodification of children and the exploitation of women, which means that surrogates are paid less for their unique contribution. Both are ethically unacceptable.

I also speak with many people through my work as a Christian pastor, and having these conversations and observing parents experiencing both the joy of having children and the heartache of not having children, both have managed life's journey remarkedly well as they trust in God to provide fulfilment throughout their lives and a higher purpose for living other than being parents. This should not be lost in this issue either.

Respectfully and sincerely yours

Pastor [redacted]

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