DEAD PEOPLE HAVE RIGHTS
BUT UNBORN PEOPLE DO NOT - STRANGE!

Gerry Wood, the Independent Member for Nelson, says the government is quietly introducing two bills (The Medical Services Amendment Bill and the Criminal Reform Amendment Bill) tomorrow which highlight a very strange fact of life – if you pardon the pun.

Under the Criminal Code you are only regarded as a person with rights if you have been born and are not dead. This gives you rights under our laws such as the right to live and anyone who takes that right away is committing a crime – murder or manslaughter.

When you die you are also protected by laws which do not permit a corpse to be interfered with.

But for the first 9 months of your life, from conception to birth, you have no protection under the law.

Gerry says that its time the definition of person was changed to mean life from conception to death ie from beginning to end, and that that person had the same rights as if born.

Gerry says this anomaly is also highlighted by the fact if the unborn is killed by a criminal action then the offence is against the mother eg grievous bodily harm, instead of also being against the person (unborn) who was injured or died as a result of the violent act.

Gerry the law as it stands means that a premature baby becomes a person with rights as soon as it is born (which can be around 23 weeks) whilst an unborn child of the same age but still in its mother’s womb has no rights because it is not yet born.

Gerry says he only realised this anomaly at a recent briefing on the bills and although he will be highlighting this anomaly during the debate he will spend time looking at this issue and consider introducing a private member’s bill in the future or introducing an amendment to the legislation at these sittings if the wording can be properly developed.

Gerry also says he will not be supporting the bills because they are cognate and he does not support abortion nor the movement of the abortion section of the Criminal Code to the Medical Services Act nor does he support to changes to the abortion guidelines as proposed.

Cessi foro gallinarum sed surgo