Proposed Abortion Laws Puts Pregnant Women At Risk

In its attempt to move the laws governing abortions from the Criminal Code Act into the Medical Services Act, Clare Martin and her Labor Government have weakened the protection that pregnant women deserve when they seek to have their pregnancies terminated, according the Member for Greatorex, Dr Richard Lim.

Dr Lim, the only medical doctor in the Legislative Assembly, who practised in the field of obstetrics and gynaecology as a general practitioner, appreciates the dangers inherent in the proposed legislative changes.

“Given my understanding about safety issues for the pregnant woman who chose to have an abortion, there is no way that I can support the Medical Services Bill.” Dr Lim said.

“While I respect that each woman has the right to chose for herself, that principle shouldn't come at the cost of her safety.

“For over 20 years, the Northern Territory has required that a specialist obstetrician/gynaecologist be involved in all terminations of pregnancy.

“Yet the Martin Labor Government presumes to know better and will legislate so that such specialist services are not required, even for a 14 – 23 week pregnancy.

“And if that means voting against the Criminal Code Act Amendments, which I support, so be it. It was wrong of the government to cognate the Bills as we tried to discuss at the last sittings.

“This is effectively putting terminations of pregnancies at the same level as doing a tonsillectomy or appendicectomy.

“There will be no legal sanction to make a doctor think twice before embarking on a termination of pregnancy, nothing to make a doctor consider whether s/he is doing the right thing for the patient when agreeing to and performing the procedure.

“The government will also remove the requirement for a specialist obstetrician/gynaecologist to assess the pregnant patient even when the procedure is much more complicated, especially between 14 and 23 weeks of pregnancy.”

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