

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

DATE: 16<sup>th</sup> of March 2018

Re: Submission in relation to the Independent review of the Human Reproductive Technology Act 1991 and Surrogacy Act

Firstly, I would like to thank you for the opportunity for hearing my views on the above changes.

My partner and I have been together for almost 5 years and there is nothing more that we want is to grow our family.

Growing up, seeing couples whether family or friends growing their own family was also something that we have always inspired to do. Our only option is through surrogacy as we are a same sex couple. My partner and I have done a lot of research around surrogacy and couldn't believe that we have to travel overseas and spend anywhere between \$150k to \$200k, this cost is not including the essentials such as pram, nappies, clothes, cots, bassinets or even the travel itself.

It's so disheartening to think that we will probably never be able to save that kind of money. We are financially stable as we have reliable jobs and also a mortgage however it's not fair that we have to spend that much money to create a family. These changes are not only affecting same sex couples, but heterosexual couples who can't conceive.

The current laws in Western Australia are discriminatory against same sex couples and need to be changed.

My recommendations are, as follows:

Greater number of surrogates – revise the Acts and supporting policies and advocacy to encourage more local surrogates to volunteer for this journey. Western Australia has a very low volunteering rate compared to other States. This is the fundamental issue that the Government should try to resolve.

Widening the compensation provisions for altruistic surrogates to ensure they receive reasonable compensation but not to a level that creates financial inducement (including financial compensation for travel, medical, psychological, loss of income).

Allowing anyone in a continuous de facto relationship from the conception of the child to be recognised as the father

Allowing pre-surrogacy agreements to be recognised in law (eliminating uncertainty post birth)

Allowing access for children to information on their surrogate and egg donor

An agency to manage surrogacy arrangements in WA, with an administrative appeal process, keeping the process simple and cost effectively.

Provide a guiding hand – government to provide the support for surrogates, their families and the intending parents, to move through the surrogacy process (or allow other entities to provide that support). Currently it is up to the persistence of the surrogate and her intending family to get through the many steps required.

Communicate more effectively – create a plain English version of the Acts that can help guide the non-lawyers amongst us.

Equal rights- that gay men should have equal rights under the law to access surrogacy.

Legal Rights- that gay families should have retrospective legal rights in respect to changes to the law surrounding parenting

I would be happy to be contacted to provide further context and detail if considered appropriate.

Yours sincerely



Peter Ravi-Pinto

