

NSW MINISTER'S PUSH FOR NO FEE SURROGACY LAWS A MISCARRIAGE OF JUSTICE

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A push to ease surrogacy laws to allow for advertising of altruistic or no-fee surrogacy by the NSW Attorney General is focussing on the desires of adults and ignoring the dignity and rights of the child.

It doesn't matter if the pregnancy is a cash and carry arrangement or free, the child is still being treated as a product, according to Life, Marriage and Family Centre Project Officer Mary Joseph.

"How are the interests of the child being protected when surrogacy arrangements unjustly deny children the right to be raised by their biological and/or birth mother and father?" Ms Joseph asked.

Acknowledging the pain couples experience when unable to have their own children Ms Joseph said; "Surrogacy is sought for a number of reasons but often because a woman is unable to conceive or carry a child to term. Clearly this is a great cause of suffering for a couple but violating the dignity and rights of women and children is not the answer."

Although no fee is charged for altruistic surrogacy, only the medical bills, health insurance and related bills are paid for by the couple, Ms Joseph said the process objectifies women by commodifying their wombs and despite agreements and contracts the birth mother often struggles to give up their child.

A 2013 study from the University of Cambridge found that children born through surrogacy experienced higher levels of emotional difficulties at seven years of age compared with other donor-conceived children. Adult children born through surrogacy have begun to speak out about their deep sense of loss and struggle with identity and belonging.

"Here in Australia we do not allow commercial surrogacy and we have strict laws surrounding altruistic surrogacy. This is because we as a society recognise the harm that surrogacy does to women and children and we as Australians refuse to support that kind of industry. "I would urge NSW Attorney General Gabrielle Upton not to push ahead with her plans to weaken the surrogacy laws," Ms Joseph said.

<http://cathnews.com/images/documents/media/150925%20NSW%20push%20for%20no%20fee%20surrogoacy%20laws%20a%20miscarriage%20of%20justice.pdf>