

Review of the WA Human Reproductive Technology Act 1991 and the Surrogacy Act 2008

SHARON GENOVESE [REDACTED]

Sent: Wednesday, March 14, 2018 4:09 PM

To: HRTSR; [REDACTED]

14th March 2018

RE: Changes to Surrogacy Laws / Staker holder Submission - Adopted infant who has reunited with Biological Family & maintains contact with all affected parties

Dear Sir/Madam,

As a stakeholder in our future generations success not failure I ask you to consider the rights of the child from conception to adulthood when making your final changes to this act in Western Australia.

The current news reports project a biased one sided view of surrogacy meaning only from the sufferings felt by the parents/adults, they do not consider the ongoing implications lack of access to biological makers through developing years has on the growing person. It has been well documented that removal of children or absence of biological parents causes attachment and identity issues for the child which can manifest into crisis affecting physical and mental wellbeing. The degree of crisis can vary in individuals and may not necessarily manifest in early years, rather coming to fruition during the surrogate child's own child bearing years or even later in life. With the ongoing Mental Health crisis developing in our communities it is fair to say producing more young people under this system will sway the balance and increase greater vulnerability to future generations and our way of life.

In my personal experience it is evident that many adoptees who miss both biological makers through their development miss the opportunity to understand and accept natural characteristics, tendencies, thinking patterns which in turn limits their drive and intuition when becoming a contributing member of society. Limiting development of full potential and positive impact many people in this position could have had on our current society. Many of my adopted friends would tell me they would never contact their biological families because they abandoned them and didn't deserve to ever be loved. Is this really what society had planned when agreeing to this process? Building greater hatred and lack of understanding in its community members? Is this all just about power, as when we make human beings vulnerable they are more amenable to manipulate and change? In the case of same sex couples one would donate/host and the other access/require surrogacy or donation this system still deprives the child of access to its biology. The natural interaction it would effortlessly be provided with through its growing years denied for some science experiment or to meet the needs of the so called "caring" adults in its life? Why must we as human beings have any say in what a child is denied, maybe only when this is outlawed will one truly value life, peace and the child's rights to full self realisation and fulfillment. Where does the World Health Organisation stand on this topic?

I can tell you as a adopted baby meeting my own biological parents, siblings and grandparents changed my life. At 17/18yrs of age I was a quiet teenager with no voice, raised by a loving older couple who had 3 male children of their own and who believed a woman's place was in the home not necessarily to be educated. There was eight years between myself and my adopted brothers so to some extent I was more like an only child due to this age gap. I was provided with food, shelter, warmth, love but it paled in comparison to the same when being with my biological family members much to the pain and suffering this caused to my adoptive parents at the time of reunion. There is an unequivocal loss that cannot be measured not mention the excessive burden placed on the child to ensure all family members are safe (adopted/biological), emotionally and physically coping with meeting and integrating others important to that said child. Consequently it results in fragmented separate family

circles who compare and dissect each others character and life choices which adds further burden to the child. Are we adding to creating a society who breed more children faced with these excessive burdens or who deny their natural self for progress sake? Only those who have felt this loss should get to have say in this change to law not those who just have a want to change it for their own personal gain.

I can also remember the first time I saw my adoption papers after I was 18yrs and the undeniable void I felt as at that moment the course of my life was changed forever. There was nothing I could do about this only just make my way a square peg in a round hole wondering why I just never seemed to fit and only truly realising I didn't when I met my biological family. Can you imagine how hard that realisation hit when I had been told I was chosen, wanted and valued which should've been enough right? Yet my own true identity was removed, taken like a criminals rights on sentencing and I had no idea why I had always felt so odd like a lovely winter coat that can't be worn because it is the wrong size.

Please do not let the suffering of a few deny the basic rights of the child as we have far too many stunted in growth through physical and mental abuse/deprivation, as it is known nurture alone doesn't provide all. I propose only the hurt and deprived preach "all you need is love" the fulfilled members of our adult community who have had both biological parents don't even preach as they know the natural laws and when applied there is much less margin for error and future discontent hatred or violence in our population.

I was told by a Lesbian colleague that lesbian couples would never ask a gay couple to donate or share in the birth of their children, rather that lesbian couples prefer to go to a donation centre and pick a sperm donor from a list of stated characteristics. This means due to other privacy laws the child has no access to its parentage thus safely securing that childs attachment to its lesbian parents right? - denying the childs ability to meet its biological makers - no rights for the child! If surrogacy laws are changed future recommendations should include contractual obligations from donors or surrogates to be physically present throughout the child's growing years until 18yrs then the child can decide who it has involved in its future growth. This will result in the child being protected and less abandonment issues thus greater societal wellbeing. I expect no-one will agree with this as they the surrogate/donor don't mind offering a womb for 9 months or and egg/sperm donation but that's as far as their responsibility lays, when it comes to ongoing responsibility they would run for the hills.

Hoping for an outcome that protects the childs rights instead of the gay/lesbian /surrogate couples.

Mrs Sharon Genovese RN - Nee Gibbs (Sharon Maree GIBBS) on my officially altered birth certificate from Angela Murphy, Biological Mother Marilyn Murphy