

To Whom it may concern,

Re: Submission in relation to the independent review of the Human Reproductive Technology Act 1991 and Surrogacy Act 2008.

As a hopeful parent, suffering with infertility and as someone that is currently considering surrogacy, I trust that you will accept this submission and give it due consideration.

In my experience, persons suffering from infertility become desperate to start a family. Those desperate people will go to the ends of the earth, regardless of any Acts or laws set by our country to try any possibility.

At present, my wife and I have exhausted all options available to us in WA to conceive a child naturally, through Invitro Fertilisation (IVF) and Intracytoplasmic Sperm Injection (ICSI). We are coming to terms with the realisation that Surrogacy is becoming our best chance to begin a family. After a great deal of research, it appears the best option available to us appears to be a commercial surrogacy arrangement with a company in the Ukraine. This will involve several trips (some several months at a time) to an unfamiliar country with unfamiliar rules and regulations trusting that a foreign commercial enterprise will be acting in our best interests. Surrogacy has been closed in countries such as India and Thailand due to dubious practices outside of Australia's control. If WA allowed or even supported surrogacy in any form it would have the ability to set in place safeguards and prevent the desperate measures required by hopeful parents.

Commercial Surrogacy in western countries have proven to be a viable and successful industry in many states within the USA and provinces of Canada. With clear rules and regulations these countries are able to provide information and encourage surrogates to volunteer for such a great gift. Surrogacy may be available within months in these countries, which for hopeful parents that have taken years to get to the point of needing surrogacy is a welcome relief.

The travel cost, agency fees and loss of income of WA parents required to go overseas would be better kept within this country, whether money goes towards any perceived cost to the Australian health system, further research, or just WA business. If WA was to allow or encourage any form of surrogacy, it would create a whole new industry for WA. Hopeful parents from other states or countries would come to WA to benefit from our progressive stance.

These hopeful parents, myself included, are not asking for financial assistance. All we require is for legal red tape and misinformation to be removed. With the Independent review of the Human Reproductive Technology Act 1991 and Surrogacy Act 2008, WA has the ability to become a progressive and supportive world leader in this field.

I thank you for giving me the opportunity to voice my opinion, and for taking the time to read it. Should you wish to discuss my submission further, please do not hesitate to contact me on;

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Yours faithfully,  
Leigh Hodson.

