

Amendments slammed by women's group: will reinforce barriers to access

Women's rights campaigning group Fair Agenda have slammed proposed amendments to the Reproductive Health Care Reform bill announced overnight.

"As stated by the 70 groups who jointly backed this legislation yesterday - the proposed bill is about supporting patients' autonomy, dignity and wellbeing. The proposed amendments would undermine that." said Renee Carr, Executive Director, Fair Agenda.

"These amendments are completely unnecessary. And they would make it harder for women to access timely healthcare; particularly vulnerable and rural women." - she added.

Quote on amendment proposing a committee make decisions after 22 weeks

"The notion that a woman facing these complex and difficult circumstances would be subjected to a committee approving her decision is humiliating. A woman in these distressing circumstances should be provided with compassionate and supportive care; not have that care delayed while she is forced to justify her deeply personal decision to a group of people she may never have met." Renee Carr, Executive Director, Fair Agenda

Quote on amendment proposing restrictions on which qualified professionals can provide care

"A woman facing the complex and distressing circumstances that lead to needing abortion care later in pregnancy should be able to access that care quickly; and from any practitioner qualified to provide that healthcare. She shouldn't be forced to wait or travel far from home and family to meet arbitrary additional requirements like these."

"Such a requirement would make it harder for women in difficult circumstances to access abortion care in a timely manner." - Renee Carr, Executive Director, Fair Agenda.

Quote on amendment proposing restrictions on which facilities can provide care

"A woman's access to healthcare shouldn't be contingent on the whim of a Minister. They should be able to access the care they need at an appropriately licenced facility, from practitioners that abide by the stringent professional guidelines and framework requirements that need to be met to provide care at this level." - Renee Carr, Executive Director, Fair Agenda

Quote on changes to provisions related to "conscientious objection"

"At their core, any provisions about these circumstances should be about ensuring patients can access unbiased advice, and be able to do so in a timely manner. Any amendments would undermine that." - Renee Carr, Executive Director, Fair Agenda.