

MEDIA RELEASE

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FAIR
AGENDA

New poll shows overwhelming support for abortion law reform, opposition to religious interference

The vast majority of NSW residents - including 71% of Liberal Party voters - want to see abortion decriminalised, and more than 80% of voters agree people's religious views shouldn't impact access to abortion, new polling shows.

The survey, undertaken by the ORU and analysed by one of Australia's foremost social researchers Rebecca Huntley, shows 77% of respondents think NSW law should be changed so that seeking or performing an abortion is no longer a criminal offence.

Commissioned by the NSW Pro-Choice Alliance and Fair Agenda, the polling reveals that almost half of the state's voters (48%) would be less likely to vote for their representative in parliament if they voted for abortion to remain a crime in NSW.

Significantly, 85% of respondents agreed that a patient should be provided with information about where they can receive unbiased advice and care about abortion, regardless of their doctor's moral beliefs on the matter and a further 81% agreed with the statement: 'I don't think one person's religious beliefs should impact on another person's access to abortion'.

The survey highlighted the public's desire to ensure doctors and other medical experts are the key informers of healthcare policy with 88% of respondents agreeing that when a woman and her family are dealing with a devastating diagnosis related to a pregnancy, their treatment options should be guided first and foremost by medical experts and relevant healthcare guidelines.

Chair of the NSW Pro-Choice Alliance, Wendy McCarthy AO, said: "NSW's abortion laws are more than a century old. They haven't kept up with community expectation and medical advancement, and this polling clearly shows NSW residents of all political persuasions want change.

"Today's polling shows that NSW MPs were right to pass the Reproductive Health Care Reform Bill through the lower house and we now need MLCs to vote in favour of the Bill without any more delays. To continue to deny women safe and legal access to abortion is unconscionable and politically untenable.

"Significantly, the polling shows a clear majority of NSW voters, including Liberal voters, support decriminalising abortion, something the party's elected representatives must keep in mind today at the Liberal state conference and when they are due to vote on the Reproductive Health Care Reform Bill," Ms McCarthy said.

Executive Director of Fair Agenda, Renee Carr said: "the Bill currently before the NSW parliament is about compassionate healthcare, patient dignity, and ending the harm the current system does to those seeking care.

"This polling shows the majority of NSW voters back MPs who support access to safe and legal abortion services.



“It’s clear the vast majority of NSW residents expect their MPs to support legal abortion care and to respect a women’s right to make her own healthcare decisions.

“Those using their religion as a reason to object to the Bill should pay close attention to the fact that 81% of those polled, including 76% of Liberal voters, agree that someone’s religious beliefs should not impact on another person’s access to abortion,” said Ms Carr.

The poll, especially its finding regarding the broad support the abortion decriminalisation Bill enjoys from Liberal voters, comes as members of the party’s Right faction [attempt to move a motion](#) at the Liberal state conference today condemning the Bill.

-ENDS-

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