

Mr Luke Williamson
Chief Executive Officer
Australian College of Midwives
PO Box 965
Civic Square ACT 2608

The Hon Scott Morrison
Prime Minister
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

23 September 2019

**RE: Senator Pauline Hanson's appointment as
Deputy Chair to the inquiry into the family law system**

Dear Prime Minister,

The Australian College of Midwives (ACM) is the national peak body representing the Midwifery profession in Australia.

We are writing to you on behalf, and at the request, of members of the profession regarding the appointment of Senator Pauline Hanson as the Deputy Chair of the pending inquiry into the family law system. This letter being prompted by the announcement of Senator Hanson's appointment, and her subsequent statements related to the behaviour of women involved to custody matters. These comments caused significant distress for many attendees at our National conference held last week in Canberra.

Midwives work with families every day and as such have first-hand experience dealing with the devastation caused by family violence. To assist midwives in providing sensitive and individualised care to women experiencing family violence, ACM has recently published a Position Statement for Domestic Violence (<https://www.midwives.org.au/position-statements>). Midwives also understand the challenges and stress families face raising healthy children, and the barriers that government and the judiciary face when dealing with family breakdowns regardless of why they have occurred.

We recognise that improvements need to be made and welcome the inquiry. However, improvements are most likely to be found by people of goodwill working collaboratively and with open minds. As such midwives are dismayed, disappointed and outraged at the comments made by Senator Hanson. While we welcome the inquiry, ACM strongly objects to the appointment of Senator Hanson and have taken this unusual step of writing to you on a political topic.

We respectfully ask that you reconsider Senator Hanson's appointment and indeed her involvement in the inquiry at all.

Yours sincerely,

Terri Barrett



President
Australian College of Midwives

Luke Williamson



Chief Executive Officer
Australian College of Midwives