

Coalition for the Defence of Human Life

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State Election Edition

PO Box 2257, Yokine South, WA, 6060
www.facebook.com/CoalitionforHumanLife
admin@cdhl.org.au

2017 Election: Where do we stand on life issues?

It is our duty as citizens to always be shaping our nation for the better. An important way we fulfill this duty is by using our vote wisely, in order that we provide our community with strong moral leadership.

A good leader will always stand up for basic human rights, especially the rights of those who are the most vulnerable. In our state, the most basic right of many people - the right to life - is under direct attack every day. This year, around 8 000 infants in WA will

die from abortion: a large-scale massacre of innocents happening in our own neighbourhoods. Meanwhile, the elderly and disabled are under threat from the prospect of euthanasia legislation re-entering Parliament. These issues are truly 'life and death'.

There are several simple, practical ways YOU can make your voice heard:

1. Call or write to your local candidates (both lower and upper house) to ask them where they stand on abortion and euthanasia, and explain how im-

portant these issues are to you and how they will affect your vote.

2. Support pro-life candidates by offering to hand out 'how to vote' flyers.

3. Talk to friends and family members about life issues, and how they should affect how we vote.

4. Vote pro-life! The table below gives indication on the policies of different parties regarding life issues (note: not all parties standing for election in WA are shown. For more detailed and up-to-date information, go to fava.org.au).

Party	Where do they stand on abortion?	Where do they stand on euthanasia?
Australian Christians*	Pro-Life	Pro-Life
Family First	Pro-Life	Pro-life
Liberal Party	Allows conscience vote. Not supportive of changes to current law	Allows conscience vote. No commitment to introduce changes to current law
National Party	Allows conscience vote. Not supportive of changes to current law	Allows conscience vote. No commitment to introduce changes to current law
Labor	Allows conscience vote. Not supportive of changes to current law	Allows conscience vote. Mark McGowan has indicated he will introduce euthanasia legislation if elected
One Nation	(Unknown)	Supportive of euthanasia
The Greens	Strongly supportive of abortion on demand	Strongly supportive of euthanasia and assisted suicide

The following individual MPs have a pro-life record: Peter Abetz MLA (*Lib for Southern River*), Vince Catania MLA (*Nat for North West Central*), Murray Cowper MLA (*Lib for Murray-Wellington*), Graham Jacobs MLA (*Lib for Eyre*), John Quigley MLA (*ALP for Butler*), Margaret Quirk MLA (*ALP for Girrawheen*), Michelle Roberts MLA (*ALP for Midland*), Ken Baston MLC (*Lib for Mining and Pastoral Region*), Peter Collier MLC (*Lib for North Metro*), Jim Chown MLC (*Lib for Agricultural Region*), Kate Doust MLC (*ALP for South Metro*), Phil Edman MLC (*Lib for South Metro*), Donna Faragher MLC (*Lib for East Metro*), Nick Goiran MLC (*Lib for South Metro*), Nigel Hallet MLC (*SFF for South West*), Alyssa Haden MLC (*Lib for East Metro*), Colin Holt MLC (*Nat for South West*), Michael Mischin MLC (*Lib for North Metro*), Helen Morton MLC (*Lib for East Metro*), Simon O'Brien MLC (*Lib for South Metro*).

*Dwight Randall, the President of the Coalition for the Defence of Human Life, is running for Parliament in the forthcoming state election. He is standing as a candidate for Australian Christians in the Upper House (Legislative Council) region of North Metropolitan. In the light of his long-standing and unwavering commitment to the sanctity of human life, the Coalition supports his candidacy.

ACL Pre-Election Events: Meet Party Leaders and Local Candidates

In the leadup to the State Election, the Australian Christian Lobby is hosting a special event featuring our current Premier, Colin Barnett, and also the Opposition leader, Mark McGowan. As well as a personal address by each of the leaders, the forum will feature a questions and answer time on specific issues. All are welcome.

This is a free event, however if you wish to attend please register at acl.org.au/mic2017

The ACL is also hosting a series of local 'meet your candidate' events throughout the Perth metro area. These forums (held in Bateman, Belmont, Bicton, Forrestfield, and Wanneroo), will provide an opportunity to 'get to know' your local candidate and ask direct questions on the issues which matter most to you. For more information, visit acl.org.au/mic2017

WA Legislation: Foetal Homicide reform a very small step forward

This article was first published in the December 17 edition of News Weekly. To view the full article and many others, please visit www.newsweekly.com.au

In the final sitting weeks of 2016 the West Australian Parliament passed the Restraining Orders and Related Legislation Amendment (Family Violence) Bill 2016, which introduces a range of legal reforms, including changes to the *Criminal Code* (WA) to deal with violence against women that harms their unborn child...

Why was this reform considered in the first place? The *Criminal Code* in Western Australia does not recognise an unborn child as a human being until "it has completely proceeded in a living state from the body of its mother". As a result, a person in Western Australia cannot be criminally responsible for homicide where they cause injuries to an unborn child and the child is stillborn as a result. In such cases the law simply does not recognise that the unborn child is a "person capable of being killed".

It was the Silvestro case in 2012 that bought this issue to public attention and led to the commitment by the Barnett Government to introduce foetal homicide law reform. The offender in that case (Matthew Silvestro) drove the car that he was travelling in with his eight-months pregnant former partner (Vanessa De Bari) and their two-year-old child directly into the path of another vehicle. Vanessa De Bari suffered serious and permanent injuries, and the unborn child that she was carrying died *in utero*.

Matthew Silvestro was convicted of dangerous driving causing grievous bodily harm, and was ultimately fined \$8,000 and disqualified from driving for two years. The charge was based solely on the injuries sustained by Vanessa De Bari. Her unborn child was not considered a person by the law despite the obvious fact that the baby would otherwise have survived had it simply been naturally born at that stage of the pregnancy (minus the injuries that were sustained *in utero*).

The perceived inadequacy of the punishment in this case led to community outrage...

The amendment that has been introduced by the Barnett Government, and passed by the WA Parliament, amends the *Criminal Code* definitions of "bodily harm" and "grievous bodily harm" to clarify that a reference to causing bodily harm or grievous bodily harm to a person includes, if the person is a pregnant woman, a reference to causing harm to the woman's unborn child or the loss of the pregnancy.

... Back in 2012 when the plan to change the law was announced, then WA Attorney-General Christian Porter said that it was "intended that the laws would create a new offence of death or grievous bodily harm to an unborn child through an unlawful assault on its mother".

This is not what has been done. Instead, the Barnett Government has chosen to extend the existing definitions of bodily harm and grievous bodily harm to in-



clude harm to a pregnant woman's unborn child as being an injury to the pregnant woman.

We should not lose sight of the fact that this reform is a step in the right direction. It will likely result in stronger sentences in cases like that of Silvestro as a result of the courts being required to have regard to the loss of the child when assessing the overall injuries sustained by the mother.

The reforms would not, however, have resulted in any difference to the actual charges that were laid against Silvestro (or the other similar cases that have occurred in Western Australia in recent years), as an injury to the mother was already recognised in the offence that was charged. The only way to ensure that an offender is held criminally responsible for the specific act of causing death or injury to an unborn child is to create a new criminal offence that views this outcome as an injury separate and distinct from any injury sustained by the mother...

The reforms introduced by the WA Government are welcome (and overdue) reforms. They strengthen and clarify the existing criminal law with regards to injuries caused to an unborn child *in utero*. However, this is not a foetal homicide law. The amended laws do not recognise the harm to an unborn child as being a wrong separate to the harm caused to the mother.

New Documentary 'Hush' Exposing the Risks of Abortion

'Hush' is a unique and challenging documentary film about abortion. Hosted by a pro-choice woman, it is a detailed investigation into the effects of abortion on women who terminate their pregnancy. Coming from a pro-woman perspective, it uncovers the real physical and emotional consequences women face after abortion – and also questions why women aren't being told about these.

'Hush' is a great way to start a conversation around abortion, and to raise awareness of the issues which surround it.

For find more information on the film and to see a trailer, go to www.hushfilm.com

Copies of the movie can also be rented or purchased through the site.