

## 18/371 Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Amendment Bill 2018

Summary of Impacts	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allowing parents to choose whether to register a child who died before 20 weeks but who was born during or after 20 weeks minimises a potential source of further distress, depression and anxiety by allowing parents to decide the significance they allocate to the loss.</li> <li>• Providing choice about registration of such loss instead of removing the registration requirement recognises that individual parents who experience stillbirth may respond differently. While some may wish to obtain legal recognition of their loss by registering the child as stillborn, others may prefer to not to acknowledge the loss or grieve privately.</li> <li>• While the proposed reforms aim to reduce a potential source of further grief for all parents, they acknowledge that birth parents (e.g. mothers) may be specifically affected by fetal loss occurring before 20 weeks.</li> </ul>

Key to impacts: Red – negative, Blue - neutral and Green - positive.

### Social

<b>Community and individual health</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mandatory registration of fetuses that die before 20 weeks but are removed afterwards can cause parents to dwell on their loss and so exacerbate feelings of depression, anger, anxiety or grief.</li> <li>• Allowing parents a choice about whether to register a fetus whose heart beat ceases before 20 weeks but that is born subsequently may assist parents' healing by allowing them to characterise the nature of the loss.</li> <li>• Where parents have chosen to reduce the size of a multiple birth pregnancy for medical or personal reasons, compulsory registration may cause parents to re-process feelings of doubt, blame or grief associated with the decision.</li> </ul>
<b>Human rights</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allowing parents greater choice about registration of loss occurring before 20 weeks, where born during or after 20 weeks, supports the right to family by authorising them to choose whether to name and acknowledge their stillborn child by registration.</li> <li>• The reforms would also allow parents to choose whether siblings' registrations of birth would disclose the existence of a stillborn sibling, which supports parents' reasonable expectation of privacy over their loss, as protected in section 12 of the <i>Human Rights Act 2004</i>.</li> </ul>
<b>Gender impacts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The proposed changes recognise that deaths in-utero may affect birth parents and their partners, if any, in different ways. The birth parent may experience a heightened sense of loss. The proposed reforms are therefore gendered and may more directly influence the well-being of mothers following early pregnancy loss or affect men and women in different ways.</li> </ul>

### Economic

Nil Impact.

### Environmental

Nil Impact