

**WOMEN LAWYERS ASSOCIATION OF NEW SOUTH WALES  
OPPOSES ZOE'S LAW**

**PRESS RELEASE 16<sup>th</sup> October 2013**

The Women Lawyers Association of New South Wales (WLANSW) notes with concern that the New South Wales Legislative Assembly is due to consider amendments to the *Crimes Act 1900* (NSW) proposed in the form of Zoe's Law this Thursday 17 October 2013.

At a Special General Meeting held on 15 October 2013 to consider this proposed Bill, an overwhelming majority of members voted to oppose its passage into law.

The very issues being considered by the Legislative Assembly were considered as part of the comprehensive and specialist Campbell Review, an inquiry commissioned in 2010. One of the cases that instigated and was considered by the Campbell Review was that of Zoe Donegan, who died when her mother, at 32 weeks pregnant, was struck by a minivan driven by a drug-affected driver. Zoe's Law is named after her.

The Campbell Review concluded the current offences under the *Crimes Act 1900* already enable the Justice system to respond appropriately to criminal incidents involving the death of an unborn child. WLANSW endorses that conclusion.

Under the proposed amendment, the destruction of the foetus of a pregnant woman (other than in the course of a medical procedure) whether or not the woman suffers any other harm, may lead to a charge of grievous bodily harm punishable by up to twenty-five years imprisonment. Changing the legal status of a foetus may have tragic and unforeseen consequences and may potentially undermine the rights of pregnant women. The complex array of legal issues involved is finely balanced.

WLANSW calls on Members of the Legislative Assembly to reject this unnecessary amendment and to defeat Zoe's Law.

For further information and enquiries, please contact Kathryn McKenzie, Executive Officer at [executive@womenlawyersnsw.org.au](mailto:executive@womenlawyersnsw.org.au) or on 0466 157 087.

Women Lawyers Association of NSW Inc.  
PO Box R1120 Royal Exchange NSW 1225  
Ph: 0466 157 087 Fax: 1300 332 183  
Email: [executive@womenlawyersnsw.org.au](mailto:executive@womenlawyersnsw.org.au)  
Web: <http://www.womenlawyersnsw.org.au>