My name is Danielle Gleeson and I am a midwife. I am writing to urge this review to insist the profession of midwifery be regulated by a midwifery board rather than a nursing or other generic health professional’s board.

Midwifery is a unique profession which has evolved significantly over the last 20 years in response to evidence and consumer demand. Midwifery is not a type or specialty of nursing. The knowledge, skills, training and philosophy are vastly different. The assumption that midwives are nurses who work in maternity care is outdated and risky. Many of Australia’s midwives, and the vast majority that will come into the profession, have never been a nurse.

Midwives need to be regulated by midwives. They must not be regulated by another profession with little or no expertise of the profession and it's work.

Having a midwifery regulatory body will:

- Allow midwifery to be recognised as the distinct profession that it is
- Allow legislative changes to be considered in light of improving health care for women and babies, without being limited by their potential impact on nursing
- Improve midwifery education
- Allow more healthy childbearing women to be empowered by woman-centred care and the underpinning midwifery philosophy of wellness, rather than disempowered by the culture of the hospital institution and the sickness model
- Allow potential disciplinary action against midwives to be regulated by those who have an expert understanding of the professional context, evidence and contemporary practice
- Provide the profession with equity in consultation and decision-making at the regulatory level
- Improve support for privately practicing midwives who work under a fee-for-service model; quite different to anything available to nurses
- Improved collection of midwifery specific health and workforce data
- Improved resourcing of midwives to models that support rural and on-country birthing models
- All of the above lead to improved care and health outcomes for women and babies

The profession of midwifery is committed to improving health outcomes for Australian women and babies. Current regulatory structures impede much of our progress toward these goals. The profession of midwifery must be regulated by a midwifery-specific regulating body.