

NEWS RELEASE

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14 rallies across Australia, thousands of women gather to tell Kevin Rudd, Our Bodies, Our Babies, Our Rights. Childbirth decisions belong with women not the PM.

Today in 14 locations across the country, women from all different backgrounds will stand together in support of their rights to make decisions in healthcare. PM Rudd will be visiting Ballarat and in fine Gold rush tradition, women believe a principled stand is necessary. Joining together from many different organisations, supported by mybirth.com.au, Australian women have a clear message for PM Rudd and their Federal Members – My Body, My Baby, My Right to Decide.

“While Tony Abbott has been scrutinised for his attitudes towards women, Kevin Rudd has sneakily agreed to removing women’s rights in pregnancy and childbirth” says Justine Caines Mother of seven and long standing maternity advocate.

Maternity reform was one of the first announced by the Rudd Government; it is a major area as it is the highest volume area of health, accounting for the greatest number of bed stays.

“The reform looked promising, finally funding midwives through Medicare, this had the capacity to reduce the Medicare Safety-Net blow out largely led by Obstetricians, improve services for rural and remote women and importantly reduce unnecessary interventions in childbirth.” said Ms Caines

“In the last 12 months the Australian Medical Association has worked furiously to maintain control of the maternity health system. Instead of listening to women and putting their needs first, Health Minister Nicola Roxon and Prime Minister Rudd, have buckled and agreed to remove a woman’s fundamental rights in favour of a ‘doctor veto’” said Ms Caines

“With these bills now in the Senate, Prime Minister Rudd has agreed to an 11th hour amendment to prevent midwifery practice and women making decisions in childbirth unless formal agreement from a doctor is sought. Without a formal agreement midwives will not be able to practice, and women will be denied a fundamental right to make decisions about their bodies.” said Ms Caines

“So if the largest volume area of health reform is failing and legislation is being determined by Australia’s most powerful trade union, the AMA, what hope is there for overall reform?” Asked Ms Caines. “PM Rudd has enabled the AMA to remove women’s rights, placing him in a dangerous position. His controlling leadership has also silenced all female Government MP’s, even those who identify themselves as feminists.” said Ms Caines

“It’s hard to know who will take us back to the 1950’s first, Abbott or Rudd” said Ms Caines

Women will gather outside the Ballarat Town Hall at 10.40am awaiting Kevin Rudd’s arrival at 11am

Rally Locations and Contacts: Ballarat Justine Caines 0408 210 273 Sydney Chris Wrightson 0414 812 144 Adelaide Helen Hriskin 0412 225 532 Canberra Emma Davidson 0411 449 524 Hobart Lalita Holmes 0416294354 Brisbane Chelsea Everingham 0413 176 241 Perth Danielle Senini 0404 993 277 Darwin Tania McLoughlin 0415 532 639 Gosford Michelle Meares 0439 645 372 Newcastle Chrissy Grainger 0418 237 938 Blue Mountains Amy Bell 0432 928 014 Cairns Kylie Taylor 0405 103 741 Stanthorpe Alison Gaffney 0404 648 486 Coffs Harbour Jessica Nash 0404 856 291 For more details visit <http://mybirth.com.au>