



YET ANOTHER REASON WHY THE TGA SHOULD DECIDE ON THE FUTURE OF RU-486

For immediate release: Wednesday 30th November 2005

Yesterday, in a spectacular error of fact, Senator Ron Boswell – a leading Government figure defending the ban on RU-486 – told the media that RU-486 is banned in China. "I was talking to a doctor last night and he told me that it was banned in China. Now if it is banned in China - a country that encourages abortion - because they think it's too dangerous, it's miles too dangerous in Australia."

This statement has no basis in fact. Indeed, Marie Stopes International has confirmed that both their clinics in China provide both surgical and medical abortions, as would most clinics that provide abortions in the People's Republic. The National Population and Family Planning Commission in China also confirmed wide spread use of RU-486, and no ban.

Reproductive Choice Australia spokeswoman and Melbourne University medical ethicist Dr Leslie Cannold said:

"This is yet another reason why we need the impartial experts at the TGA, not biased Government Ministers making decisions about the availability of RU-486. Senator Boswell appears to have received false information on the availability of this drug, and without checking his facts, decided to spread this misinformation around."

"It is high time politicians got out of the business of passing opinions on the safety of drugs, and allowed the proper authority – the Therapeutic Goods Administration – to conduct these evaluations on the basis of research and medical evidence. We need to get politics out of medicine".

Reproductive Choice Australia is a coalition of over 20 organisations including Sexual Health & Family Planning Australia, Children By Choice, the Public Health Association of Australia, the Australian Women's Health Network, the Women's Electoral Lobby, and all state based pro-choice coalitions.

"Reproductive Choice Australia believes in supporting women to make the best choices for themselves and their families in the case of an unplanned pregnancy," Dr Cannold said.

For more information, contact Dr Leslie Cannold on 0417 114 859