

Questions sent to Reem Alsalem

UN Special Rapporteur on violence against women and girls

QUESTION 1

The surrogacy advocates we've contacted have disputed the claim that—in the US—a significant number of surrogates are motivated by economic desperation. They cite screening measures that filter out women who would not choose surrogacy if they were financially stable. They've pointed to a certain amount of academic work that appears to support this, such as this (admittedly small) [2024 study](#).

What data is Ms. Alsalem citing when she makes the claim that the majority of surrogates are "incredibly impoverished, poor, vulnerable," "may have come from countries that have been ravaged by war," and are motivated by desperate financial circumstances? Is this data applicable to paid surrogacy in the US?

QUESTION 2

Many owners of surrogacy agencies in the US acknowledge that some agencies operate unethically, but claim that federal legislation would solve this (i.e., they say that surrogacy itself does not need to be banned, merely regulated). Ms. Alsalem seems to reject this, supporting an abolitionist model. What is it about surrogacy that makes tighter regulation an insufficient response?