

**Rev Dr Christian Fandrich**  
**BM BS (Flinders), FRACGP, GradCertMuscMed (Flinders), BTh BMin (ALC)**

1<sup>st</sup> April AD 2012

**Committee Secretary**  
**Senate Legal and Constitutional Committee**  
**PO Box 6100**  
**Parliament House**  
**Canberra ACT 2600**  
**Australia**

**Re: Marriage Equality Amendment Bill 2010**

Thank you for this opportunity to submit a response to the proposed *Marriage Equality Amendment Bill 2010* introduced by Senator Hanson-Young. I write to you as a concerned citizen, husband, father of five children, general practitioner, pastor of the Lutheran Church of Australia, and authorized marriage celebrant.

I strongly oppose the *Marriage Equality Amendment Bill 2010*, and affirm and support the *Marriage Act 1961*, and *Marriage Amendment Act 2004* as they currently stand.

Marriage is a gift from God, the Creator of humankind, and is an essential institution for the creation, and continuation of good order in our society. The Parliament of Australia has been given the authority, freedom and privilege to enact legislation *for* the benefit of marriage in Australia, and for Australian society. However, the Parliament of Australia does not have the authority to change the essential nature of marriage, which this proposed bill attempts to do.

The essential nature of marriage is explicitly recognized, and defined in both the *Marriage Act 1961*, and *Marriage Amendment Act 2004*, namely that, “marriage is the union between a man and a woman to the exclusion of all others, voluntarily entered into for life.” Marriage has always been understood to be exclusively between one man and one woman, and the complementary nature of the two is essential to the nature of marriage. Theologically, socially, mentally, physically, biologically, and philosophically, marriage is the union of a man and a woman. It can be no other way.

I say this on the basis of the clear evidence and testimony of; 1) the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament<sup>1</sup>, 2) the fundamental laws which govern nature, 3) the laws and customs which have governed societies throughout history, and 4) clear reason.

---

<sup>1</sup> For example Genesis 1:27-28; 2:24, Matthew 19:4-9.

Current marriage legislation which intentionally states that marriage is a “union between a man and a woman” clearly recognises the complementary nature and roles of the husband and the wife within a marriage. This recognition that the essence of marriage is the “union between a man and a woman” is not about perpetuating unjust discrimination, but about common sense and recognizing the reality of the beneficial, and God given differences between men and women. After all, all of us live, breathe, and have our being today because of these essential differences. Protecting this essential nature of marriage, “the union between a man and a woman”, really is about celebrating diversity.

Although marriage has been enacted, recognized, and solemnised in different ways across the world and throughout the passage of history, this one constant fact has been recognised by all societies, religions, and worldviews. Marriage has always been exclusively the union of a man and a woman. Changing the definition of marriage to “the union between two people, regardless of their sex, sexuality or gender identity”, which includes the possibility of “the union between a man and a man” or “between a woman and a woman”, which is the bill’s stated intention, is an unwise and dangerous social experiment. Any sort of union between two people, other than that between a man and a woman is not a marriage. By its very nature marriage is particularly defined and discriminatory.

This means that there is the possibility of the state recognising and regulating other sorts of relationships between two people, for example ‘civil unions’. However, these cannot be called or considered to be marriages.

An important and practical philosophical point needs to be made at this point. Discrimination itself is not an evil word or concept. In fact, it is a reality we live with every day, and very often for our own benefit. Although the word ‘discrimination’ does have a negative sense, it can also be used positively to imply discernment or wise consideration. We discriminate when we choose what sort of food we eat, what career we will follow, or what school we wish our children to attend. So too, senators of the Parliament of Australia have been called upon to carefully discriminate between the various submissions which will be received in response to this proposed bill. All this ‘discrimination’ is necessary for the benefit of our society. So too marriage is by its very nature discriminatory, it is the union between a man and woman to the exclusion of all others.

It would not be a far stretch of the imagination, should the Parliament follow the philosophy of this proposed bill, that one day it might be considered ‘discriminatory’ to prohibit the marriage between three or four people. With this sort of ill-considered and superficial ‘anti-discriminatory’ philosophy, marriage legislation would once again be amended with further disastrous consequences.

Another important reason for my opposing this proposed bill is my concern for the welfare of our children and our society. The best environment to raise and nurture children is with their father and mother. It is without doubt, that many single parents, and their extended families, do a marvelous job in raising their children. However, most people, single parents included, if asked, “Does a daughter need a mother, or a son need a father?”, would answer “Yes”.

Legislation that changes the very essence of marriage, will most likely also change the very essence of parenting and the raising of children in a significant number of “same-sex marriages”. The proposed bill will endorse, formalize, and institutionalise this radically new social experiment. It would lead to a significant number of children being told they have “two mums and no dad” or “two dads and no mum”. What all children need is simply one father *and* one mother. By its very nature parenting needs to be complementary. No matter how hard one may try, only a man can be a father, and only a woman a can be mother. This is a simple and basic fact that cannot be altered or denied.

Marriage is the union of a man and a woman to the exclusion of all others, voluntarily entered into for life. This must be explicitly reflected in our marriage legislation. Please register my strongest opposition to the *Marriage Equality Amendment Bill 2010* which is currently before the Senate.

I thank you for your work in representing the people of Australia, and the opportunity to make this submission. I encourage you to continue the painstaking work in carefully preparing, and enacting legislation for the benefit of our nation, especially with regard to marriage.

Yours faithfully,

Rev Dr Christian Fandrich  
Pastor, Redeemer Evangelical Lutheran Church, Toowoomba