

To: Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Legislation Committee
legcon.sen@aph.gov.au

Dear committee members,

Re Marriage Equality Amendment Bill 2010

It is unbelievable to me that this issue is being presented yet again, when this same committee considered this issue with the 'Marriage Equality Amendment Bill 2009'

It is my belief that marriage is and should only ever be between a man and a woman and therefore same sex couples should not achieve equal treatment because their understanding of relationship is different from that of a marriage in essence.

Following the Marriage Forum in 2004, with the support of the Labour Party, an amendment was inserted into the Marriage Act 1961 that marriage was between "a man and a woman". That marriage is between a man and a woman is a key element. To redefine marriage as between two consenting adults clearly undermines all that marriage stands for - the stable loving unit into which children can be born and raised.

Marriage between a man and a woman has been the historical basis for society before history was recorded. It mirrors the teaching of every major religion and almost every culture, and has been supported by thousands of years of collective wisdom. Marriages existed long before the Constitution and the state acknowledged or regulated them.

Marriage is the committed relationship between a man and a woman. To maintain this traditional understanding of marriage is an acknowledgement of a most valuable and important social act. Marriage involves vows of a lifetime exclusive commitment to sexual faithfulness. The majority of homosexuals, regardless of health, vitality and economic well-being, reject such a commitment.

It is well known that same-sex relationships are not only unstable, but also very unhealthy. Most homosexuals admit that their understanding of marriage differs from the normal heterosexual marriage, with the willingness to allow extra-marital sexual outlets. They are self-seeking and because of this and their instability, are not to be considered in the same terms as marriage. Allowing homosexual relationships to be considered as marriage would seriously undermine marriage, as we know it.

Benefits to society of traditional marriage and family include the following:

- a. It provides a stable basis for family – a mum and dad, based on the complementary nature of men and women – and thus for society.
- b. It provides definition of roles – income earning, decision making, child care
- c. Responsibility – for other than yourself, for care of children from birth to adulthood
- d. Financial base - the family unit provides incentive to build an economic base, home ownership, and to take economic responsibility
- e. Support – emotional safety, cross generational emotional support, support in sickness, encouragement
- f. Relationship – cross gender and cross generational bonding and connectedness
- g. Reproduction - a socially recognised means by which children are brought into the world and cared for
- h. Social and mental health – a secure caring relationship between a man and a woman produces happy well-adjusted children and socially and mentally healthy adults who are able to contribute to society
- i. Role models – male and female roles are demonstrated by example to children, as are the benefits of marriage and stable families
- j. Community involvement – the responsibility of marriage and rearing children engages families in the wider community as involvement in schools and sports increase.

The 2004 amendment to the Marriage Act received overwhelming public support and the support of both the Labour and Liberal Parties. Surely that renders the current push by the Greens as against public wishes, and against Labour belief? Or is the Labour Party so weak in its convictions that it is pushed around by the Green bullies (a minority party and representing a minority interest!) so easily?

I wish to state again that it is extremely important to me that the institution of marriage between a man and a woman is protected and that same sex couples should not be treated equally especially in terms of marriage.

Yours sincerely