

01st March 2012

To whom it may concern,

RE: Inquiry: Marriage Equality Amendment Bill 2010.

As a young boy growing up in rural Queensland, I could not wait to grow up, get married, have kids and live the great Australian dream. In grade 2, two year seven students held a fake wedding and that made my dream of one day being a groom even more real. I found a toy ring on the grass and got engaged to my best (girl) friend at the time and we were going to marry when we reached grade 7. Unfortunately I moved in grade 4 and by the time I had finished grade 7 I was attracted to the other males in my class rather than the girls.

I still held a glimmer of hope in my eyes that one day I still could be a groom waiting for the man I was going to spend the rest of my life with to walk down between the pews and say "I do". Then reality hit me head on in grade 10 legal studies where we learnt that marriage was not a right but a privilege, a privilege that only a heterosexual couple would ever be allowed to partake in.

This very fact made me upset, confused and even question whether I was a 'normal' person or was I some sort of mistake, were people such as myself one in a million and were there any others like myself. We never learnt what a homosexual, Transgender, Gender Queer was, all we had to go by was what we saw in movies and on TV; this led to us young people knowing only false stereotypes.

When I moved to the city only a few years ago I met others just like myself and understood that I was not alone, I was not a freak and most importantly that the love I could feel for another male was and is true love and not something made up.

I write this letter today to the inquiry to ask you to please look past what the opposition has the say for a Christian I know that God and Jesus are about love and accepting not judging others by who they love but for who they are on the inside; that is what really counts.

I also ask you to think of this. What would you do if you were my parents, how would you respond on that one day where I didn't know if my parents who have never not loved me would respond when I told them I liked guys. Would you yell and scream, would you kick me out or would you tell me that you loved me and accepted me.

For to many parents already yell and scream and kick their children out for something that their child, someone who was the jewel of their parent's eye, cannot control. Please don't be that parent.

Please be the parent that the child will be proud of, the parent that other young people will know will be ok and accept them for who they are even if others around just don't quite get them. Please be the parent we young people need you to be and not the parent who is our worst nightmare at our most vulnerable time

Thank you :)