

## Open Letter to Prime Minister Julia Gillard on Marriage in Australia

Dear Ms Gillard,

Like many Australians, we are pleased you said, soon after you became Prime Minister, that “marriage is between a man and a woman” (*The Age*, 1/7/10). We are even more delighted that you affirmed this view some months later – adding that “in our society, with our heritage, with our traditions, with our history, marriage has a special place and special definition” (*ABC Radio National*, 18/11/10).

Governments have granted marriage a privileged status not given to other types of relationships, for two key reasons:

- only marriage provides the best environment for raising children - stability plus complementary male and female role models (*Mum and Dad*); and
- men and women complement each other in marriage - benefiting each other and society.

Research shows that marriage is the most enduring of human sexual relationships - more stable than male-female cohabitation and far more stable than homosexual relationships. Children raised by their married parents do better than those raised by cohabiting parents, who do better than children raised by same-sex partners. Children brought up in non-marriage contexts have higher rates of physical and mental health problems, child abuse, criminality, drug abuse and poor academic performance.

Marriage is under attack across the Western world today. Several countries have already given in to pressure from the homosexual lobby to allow same-sex “marriage” or official registration of same-sex relationships. The result has been a decline in respect for marriage, an increase in fragile male-female cohabitation, and more children growing up in fatherless homes.

Giving same-sex partnerships the legal recognition of marriage would undermine its unique status – with devastating consequences for children and for society.

In 2004 the Commonwealth Parliament amended the Marriage Act 1961, affirming the long established meaning of marriage, already implied in the Schedule, as “the union of a man and a woman to the exclusion of all others, voluntarily entered into for life”. The homosexual lobby are now attempting to amend the Marriage Act to change this age-old definition.

The Greens’ so-called *Marriage Equality Amendment Bill 2010* would remove the critical words “a man and a woman” from the definition of marriage in the Marriage Act. This change would undermine the rightful honour given by society to faithful man-woman marriage as the best environment for raising the next generation of Australian citizens.

Please protect children and Australia’s future by ensuring that your government continues to oppose any change to the fundamental complementary man-woman meaning of marriage – thus affirming children’s need for both male and female parental role models.