



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

**Submission to inquiry by the Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs of the  
Marriage Equality Amendment Bill 2010**

Dear Committee Secretary,

This submission on behalf of the Bisexual Alliance Victoria committee, strongly supports the Marriage Equality Amendment Bill 2010 which seeks to remove all sex, sexuality and gender identity discrimination from the Marriage Act 1961.

There are those that argue that ending this discrimination is against their religious beliefs and should not go ahead. Australia though is a pluralist society that accepts differences of belief without one religion endorsed above another by government. No-one has the right to impose their beliefs onto others, either within that faith or those outside. The calls for same-sex relationships to be an exception to this exposes the queerphobia inherent in their position.

Others argue that the bill will redefine marriage. The legal definition of marriage itself has changed over history such as the removal on restrictions of inter-racial marriage and the provision for divorce. Society's concept of marriage has also changed from its origins of asserting a man's ownership of a woman to that of a shared journey through life.

Another argument put forward is that only a minority of people have same-sex relationships. We would respond that the human right of equality and relationship recognition exists regardless to how many are discriminated against.

Marriage is a symbolic event that conveys to those present, and to the broader society, the commitment of one person to another. However, the Marriage Act as it is currently written expressly denies the right for people with same-sex partners to do so. This bill is an important step towards equality for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender Australians and we urge the committee to find in its favour.

James Dominguez  
President  
Bisexual Alliance Victoria