



Committee Secretary
Senate Legal and Constitutional Committee
Parliament House Canberra ACT 2600
Today's Date

Marriage Equality Amendment Bill 2010

Dear Committee Members.

I am the pastor of the Lutheran Parish represented above and I make my submission in relation to the proposal to recognise same-sex relationships as marriage.

There is no question that the Government has the duty to protect all people, even those with whom we may not agree. It needs to ensure that there is justice for all. That concept is not under question by me or by my Church. It is my belief that such care and protection has already been provided for in many ways. As a Christian and a pastor of my Church, I believe in the sanctity of marriage as the institution provided by God for one man and one woman to be in relationship to each other for life. This relationship is in place for the primary purpose of pro-creation and the provision of the best possible environment for bringing up children. A same-sex relationship is not and cannot be such in all respects. Changing the marriage act will devalue this special procreative relationship provided by God at creation. Such devaluation will inevitably have a detrimental effect upon society at a time when the family is already under severe stress. Confusion and misunderstanding will be the inevitable result for children. Society will suffer – a fact borne out by history many centuries ago at the times when moral decline has been in full swing.

I have browsed through a good number of the submissions to date. Many have presented spurious arguments in favour of the proposal. Sadly, among them also Christians, who, it appears, have resigned themselves to either ignoring or reinterpreting the very foundation of the Christian faith, the Bible, where the issue of same-sex relationship is never condoned or endorsed in any shape or form, but rather expressly forbidden. Those who suggest that “love” is the all important factor appear to ignore all the other important aspects of the relationship of a man and a woman in marriage. What is wrong one day cannot suddenly be right the next day.

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I also note with sadness the constant accusations made against those who do not support same-sex relationships being considered as marriage. Not a day goes by when there is not an accusation of hate, injustice, homophobia etc., purely because we believe a certain standard to be beyond change. Such accusations are entirely malicious. Certainly there are those who make all kinds of undesirable suggestions about actions against people of same-sex orientation – I would dissociate myself from them entirely and condemn their views.

I also note that there is so much evidence that the homosexual community is giving very little support to this proposal and that its large support comes from a minority and a group of vocal supporters outside of their ranks. That is significant and cannot be ignored. Coupled with that, the frequent references to breaking down the whole institution of marriage as a part of the freeing of society, should engender serious concern about this proposal.

It seems to me that once the criteria are set for the way in which the basics of society can be changed and/or broken down, the trend will continue. So, when people express concern that other issues, such as polyamory, will follow, they are really expressing the concern that, having adopted this process for change, the driving force has been set in motion. Others will follow suit and use the same process. It is not saying at all that the homosexual community will be at the forefront of such a move, but merely drawing attention to the fact that the trend has been set and will therefore be applied by others of unscrupulous intent to other previously accepted positions in society.

I humbly ask that this legislation be not passed, but that appropriate care continue to be provided to all under the laws of fairness and justice without demeaning such an important institution of marriage.

Wally Schiller,
Pastor