

Dear Review Committee,

I am emailing to put forward my support for the following changes in the Human Rights and Anti-Discrimination Bill 2012.

It is imperative that sexual orientation and gender identity protections be included in federal law. In the streets, in employment and in general in every day activities of citizens going about their daily lives discrimination against GLBTI persons does occur. If protection is enshrined in law it does have a flow on effect, including a reminder to all persons that it is illegal to discriminate due to a persons sexual orientation and gender identity.

At an emotional level I feel if we are not given equal rights, including anti discrimination protection and are obviously considered second rate citizens in certain ways than why should we pay the same level of tax.

It is important to ensure that a national law sets a national standard by including protections on the grounds of sexual orientation and relationship status (formerly marital status). changing the ground of 'marital status' to 'relationship status' ensures that same sex and other LGBTI relationships are protected from discrimination. The proposed definition of sexual orientation protects Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual people without using these labels, thus being more inclusive. I recommend using the 2012 Tasmanian definition of "Gender Identity"(which is inclusive.

In finality I personally carry some 'wise' anxiety and constant watchfulness when in public with my partner or as an individual due to abuse because of my sexual orientation. This has been firmly cemented in my psychic from too many incidents of verbal and in some cases physical abuse towards my partner and I. For example my partner has been deliberately elbowed on a dance floor and my drink kicked over and we left the venue on a New Year Eve celebration as we were intimidated and felt extremely unsafe. I have been in a march where a male shouted out we should be put on a desert island and petrol poured over us and burnt to death.

We have been in a tent, surrounded by other tent dwellers, and a group of men harassed my partner and I for many long hours in the night and no-one came to our aid. We were very frightened and when day light came we packed up our tent and gear and left.

Recently my partner and I were verbally abused and threatened by a local male, he shouted he would punched our heads in. This was only a few streets from our home. We now void that street and especially that particular house, in case that male is in his front yard. We are both in our fifties and were not causing any trouble and it is very disheartening. Protection of all citizens is a right in a fair, equal and justice society. We all must make strident steps in regards to keeping all citizens equally protected and safe.

Kind regards,

Lorraine Harrison