

**Rabbinical Council of Australia and New Zealand (RCANZ) and Rabbinical Council of Victoria (RCV)
Submission on the Senate's Exposure Draft of the Marriage Amendment (Same-Sex Marriage) Bill**

The Rabbinical Council of Australia and New Zealand (RCANZ) and the Rabbinical Council of Victoria (RCV) recognise that same-sex marriage can be a deeply emotive issue for some members of the Jewish and wider community. RCANZ and RCV are sensitive to the possibility that supporting traditional marriage as defined as between a man and a woman may be perceived as unsupportive of individuals who identify as gay or lesbian, and their families. Therefore it is with a spirit of love and respect for all people that RCANZ and RCV reiterate their adherence to two central positions of Judaism.

Aside from the numerous social arguments in favour of traditional marriage, RCANZ and RCV support traditional marriage based on the universal Jewish teaching divinely ordained in our holy Torah and expressed in the codes of Jewish law that marriage can only be between a man and a woman. At the same time, RCANZ and RCV reaffirms Judaism's fundamental obligation to respect and embrace all people irrespective of their sexuality and condemns in the strongest possible terms words or actions intended to denigrate or hurt others.

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