

12 March 2012

Committee Secretary
Senate Legal and Constitutional Committee
PO Box 6100, Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600, Australia.
legcon.sen@aph.gov.au

Dear Committee Secretary,

Marriage Equality Amendment Bill 2010

Thank you for this opportunity to make a submission to the Committee.

I support same-sex marriage and this Bill for the following reasons:

1. Australia upholds international standards of human rights, including the principle that all people are entitled to equal recognition and protection under the law. Currently, same-sex couples are denied this equality.
2. Marriage equality would uphold and strengthen the family as a basic social unit in our society, by providing equal status to all parents and children, regardless of the sex, sexual orientation or gender identity of the parents.
3. Marriage equality is vital because it mitigates against prejudice and homophobia. The current ban on same-sex marriage serves to legitimise homophobic bullying and prejudice in Australian society.
4. Our government's 2008 apology to indigenous Australians is evidence that society evolves and that improved standards of human rights must be adopted which reflect new societal understandings. The current ban on same-sex marriage is opposed by an increasing majority of Australian citizens, and it is time for the law to be changed in order to reflect this reality.

I recall, as a child in the 1960s, overhearing adults who then opposed interracial marriage on such grounds as tradition, religion, and the need to protect children. It is most unfortunate that these same discredited excuses are still being recycled a generation later in order to justify another form of prejudice in Australia.

In the name of human rights and equality, and in recognition of the diversity which enriches our multicultural society, I ask the government to support the Marriage Equality Amendment Bill 2010.

Thank you for your consideration.

Yours faithfully,

Geoff Allshorn.