

National Human Rights Consultation Submission

AGWW-7QA2HR

Organisation: Private citizen

Submission Text:

Submission: Equal Treatment for Same-Sex Couples - Marriage.

My same-sex partner and I have been together for almost thirty five years and our relationship is such that we rely on each other in every aspect in our lives. Ours is a very loving and monogamous relationship that has withstood intolerable bigotry and intense homophobia over the years. During our working lives we have held important and influential government positions and paid our full share of taxation. We have provided for ourselves in our retirement and we are not receiving any government welfare assistance. We have never lost sight of our responsibility to support our community. In fact, we lead a very normal life, similar to many thousands of other couples here in Australia. The only difference is that my partner and I are both male. We truly look forward to the time that legislation is passed that will allow us to get married, hopefully before it is too late and one of us, or both of us die.

Why should there be a difference, though, in how couples are treated? There should be no difference at all. We are all human beings and we all have the same needs and desires: to love and be loved and to choose a life partner. My partner's and my relationship is just as important as any other couple's relationship so why should we not be able formalise it in the form of marriage?

I put forward that the only reason for this is the fact that the prejudice and homophobia for Same-Sex marriages are firmly rooted within the Church. People are hard pressed to come up with one valid non -religious reason to oppose the formalization of same-sex marriages.

Same-Sex marriages certainly must be legislated for here in Australia because any objections to such marriages are hard to nail down outside of religious bigotry.

One example of religious intolerance is its insistence that procreation is the sole purpose of marriage. Of course this nonsense rules out Same-Sex marriages. But if this restriction is used to prevent Same-Sex marriages then the following people should never be allowed to marry either: Men who have had vasectomies, women who have had hysterectomies, post-menopausal women, men and women who are sterile, for whatever reason, whether from illness, injury or unknown causes. To follow through with this theme perhaps the government should enforce fertility tests before a marriage license is issued. If one party is infertile then no marriage should be allowed. Marriages that don't produce children after a certain period of time should be declared null and void.

I have put forward these radical and ridiculous suggestions merely to show the absurdity of the church's chant that marriages must produce offspring. And if such measures seem outlandish (as indeed they are), then the objection to Same-sex marriages is equally outlandish. Marriage equality should be granted to same-sex couples who want to commit to each other (as my partner and I have committed to each other) and it should not be denied them by governments that fear religious retribution.

Church groups say that homosexual activity is "unnatural" The bible say's it's an "abomination," but who is going to define what is natural sexual practice. Many "normal" heterosexual marriages include many supposed "unnatural" sexual activities, oral, anal, or otherwise. Ask any marriage councilor, or psychologist.

People's bedrooms are their own business and are not the business of the government or the church.

This bedroom issue serves to highlight the stupidity of the religious attitude with expressions of horror regarding homosexual activity.

Conservative Christians think that homosexual activity can be overcome with Christian therapy (brain washing by doctrine) and 'prayer'.

The centuries old Christian bible not only opposes homosexuality but it demands the death sentence. This is bigotry at its most evil. This is the ultimate of intolerance, and it pretty much defines homophobia. If two people of the same sex love each other and want to formalize their commitment with marriage, so what. The world can always use more love and commitment. It's about time we outgrew our bigoted, discriminatory, divisive way of religiosity that seems to dominate our lives.

In closing it has to be said that there are some Protestant denominational churches that have seen fit to ordain homosexual men into the ministry? Does this mean that some within the institution of the church choose not to take the bible literally? Is the bible valid in today's society? How can a centuries old bible contain the 19th century word homosexual? Who replaced the word sodomy with homosexual? How can the 14th century word "marry" be part of an ancient biblical book of folklore and mythology?

I summarize my submission by the following points:

1. A Charter of Human Rights should be created for all Australian Citizens to ensure that we are ALL treated equally and fairly.
2. The Charter of Human Rights should be gender non-specific.
3. The Charter of Human Rights should include provision for ALL citizens to marry (including same-sex couples) , not just opposite sex couples.
4. The Charter of Human Rights should try to limit any religious influence / pressure on our governments

Thank you