

# National Human Rights Consultation Submission

AGWW-7M84ZY

**Name:** Alison Gilbert

**Submission Text:**

Dear National Human Rights Consultation Committee,

Australia has often been called "The Lucky Country", and in many ways it is. However, this is also a stereotype which hides numerous individual sufferings and inequalities, often only heard of through word of mouth, or in rare cases through the media.

I have had access to many of these stories and situations by working as a community worker in a neighbourhood centre, and a community transport coordinator for disabled and elderly people. I've also experienced injustice first hand as a single mother, and as a housebound invalid.

I believe in living in a civilised society, and that means contributing and working towards making the local and wider community sustainable and fair, with rights for all, and with particular assistance to those who have difficulty accessing those rights. These include children, the elderly, the sick and disabled, indigenous Australians, "boat people" and other marginalised and disadvantaged individuals and groups.

It is an anachronism that Australia is the only democratic nation in the world that doesn't have human rights protection. We live without the security of knowing that we will be protected by a Human Rights Act in the event of needing it. It's only those who have not yet needed it who may feel secure. We cannot depend on community outrage to save us (this requires resources which are not usually available to those who need it), or the unlikely chance that "A Current Affair" will pick up our story.

My experience of living in the U.S.A showed me that constitutional rights are a valued and integral part of the relationship between people and their country. We can learn from the experiences of other cultures when drawing up our own Human Rights Act, and from Victoria and the A.C.T's.

It is imperative that this opportunity for a Human Rights Act for Australians is not lost. I request that we are given legislative protection now.

Yours sincerely,

Alison Gilbert  
%0A