

20 December 2018

Reply to Supplementary Question from the Standing Committee on Social Issues, Gay and Transgender Hate Crimes Between 1970 and 2010.

1. In the third paragraph of your opening statement (page 2 of Hansard) you say: "Today there is still religious-based stigma that we could point out." Can you provide examples of what you call "religious-based stigma" in Australia in 2018?

In my opening statement I referred to the stigma associated with homosexuality and homosexuals. I used the word stigma in its common meanings of 'a strong feeling of disapproval ... a strong lack of respect for a person or a group of people or bad opinion of them because they have done something society does not approve of' (Cambridge Dictionary, online). Historically the main institutions perpetuating this stigma have been religion, the law and medicine. The latter two institutions have mostly removed their opposition to homosexuality and the people considered to be homosexual. An example of 'religious-based stigma' that I was referring to is demonstrated in the exemption from anti-discrimination law for faith-based organisations, and in particular schools, which has been focus of the Australian Government's Religious Freedom Review. At the time of my appearance this review had not been released though leaks were discussed throughout the media. A focus of discussion was the exemptions in the states' and territories' anti-discrimination law for faith-based organisation, particularly private schools (e.g., 'private educational authority' as defined by the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1977*, (NSW) Sect 4) to discriminate against staff and students based on sex. The Religious Freedom Review has since been released and Recommendations 5 and 7 that support a continuation of exemptions for discrimination on the basis of sex be continued. Furthermore, the Australian Government has moved that Recommendations 5-8, which refer to sex and gender, be sent off for 'further CONSULTATION AND LEGAL consideration.'

Yours Sincerely

Dr. Allen George