

**Submission
No 554**

INQUIRY INTO SAME SEX MARRIAGE LAW IN NSW

Name: Mr Chris Vintiner

Date received: 13/02/2013

I am writing in SUPPORT of the proposed same sex marriage inquiry

My Husband and I (Married in Canada) have been together for 12.5 years and Married for nearly 5. We both are decent hard working human beings who deserve equal rights. I deserve the same right to Marry and be recognised by the Law of the Country as my 2 younger Sisters and My Younger Brother. Both mine and my Husbands families fully accept our relationship and consider us Married. We have religious members on both side, Morman, Jehovah Witness, Born again Christian, Anglican and all of them attended our Ceremony we had here in Perth with over 130 guests.

It was an amazing day marred only by the fact that it wasn't legal.

We experienced no discrimination while setting up our wedding, just disbelief that it was not legal. And on more than one occasion some of the people thought it was already legal.

This unfair law currently in place Hurts us every single day in so many ways. My husband is Uncle to my Niece, but not legally, We have parent in laws, but not legally. Sitting at work listening to people talk about their husbands or wives just rubs it in that we are not as good as them in the eyes of the Government. My every waking thought is about the struggle for equality, every tea break, lunch break, bus ride or time spent in front of the computer I am accessing some form of media to see what has happened that day in regards with us being considered as equals.

We come across as strong Happy People but it Hurts to be segregated, it hurts when Religious Leaders call us unnatural, pedophiles, dirty, diseased, damaging to society, abused.

We are just 2 normal people who love each other, are here to support each other, want to spend our lives together as a Happily Married Couple like our Parents.

Growing up as Children we are expected to find that 1 special person that we are going to spend the rest of our lives with in Marriage, creating a family and living Happily ever after. But for the LGBT community you are telling us that we are not worthy of this, that we are not as good or special as our Parents, our Brothers, our Sisters, our Grandparents, our Aunts and Uncles.

The first step to removing discrimination has to start with the government. Besides the legal issues, we would like same-sex marriage approved to remove the stigma that we are somehow different. I fail to see how we are any different to heterosexuals when we both work full-time, pay taxes, have a mortgage, have all our accounts in both of our names. My Husband even changed his surname to mine so we are under the one family name. We are both faithful and loving to each other and I believe we uphold the sanctity of marriage more so than many heterosexual couples as we have to fight so hard to have the thing which others take for granted.

In no way should religious organisations have any say over my relationship and i also don't feel that they should have to be made to perform any Marriages that they don't want to, just as they are free to not marry divorced people, and this should be written into any federal or state law to protect their rights.

Having a ban on Marriage Equality serves no purpose, and has no effect, other than to lessen the status and human dignity of gays and lesbians in Australia, and to officially reclassify their relationships and families as inferior to those of opposite-sex couples

And what it does for me is important but what it does for gay children is indescribable. There are children who are watching this play out right now across the country in households that are free to tell people that they believe that they are gay and they just saw the legislature of the greatest state in the union say that they are equal and that they matter. That will keep children alive. It will give them hope. And it will tell them that it does get better and that they matter.

So PLEASE do everything in your power to make this a reality by creating a truly EQUAL Society for ALL Australians.

Chris Vintiner