

## **INQUIRY INTO SAME SEX MARRIAGE LAW IN NSW**

**Name:** Mr Neville Dwyer

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NEVILLE DWYER

Chairperson  
Social Issues Committee  
Parliament House  
Macquarie St  
Sydney, 2000

12<sup>th</sup> February, 2013

Dear Members of the Committee

I would like to add my support to move for equality in Marriage with the inclusion of Same Sex Marriages within the Marriage act.

My story is not uncommon, I am a gay male who is 54 years old. I live in regional NSW and for much of my life I was not out. Bullying at school and the general homophobic attitude within the broader community to homosexuals lead me to suppress who I was and meant that I had to become something I was not. I have had three relationships with women, two of those long term, but at no time could I commit to them enough to marry - it always felt wrong - a betrayal of them and myself. I knew I was gay from a young age, but at no time did I act on that while in a relationship or even prior to that.

Friends often asked if I was gay and I would deny it, so they left it alone.

When I was 47 I met a guy who changed my life. He said "people fall in love with people", he passed no judgement and was just who he was. At that moment I felt I could be free. I came out to family - traumatic as that was, and something I don't think anyone should have to do - its like being Gay is wrong and its not - its just in the DNA, but we have created that sense that it is. My mother screamed and carried on - saying all the worst things possible, my father said he had always known!! My friends said yep, whats new and the world carried on. My mother came round, and I was just never allowed to bring anyone home.

I'm single, not out of choice, but growing and living in regional Australia doesn't give you many opportunities to meet the right person. I have had two relationships since I came out, both have not ended well, but I suppose that's life.

I believe that broadening the definition of who can get married to include same sex couples will change the outcomes for many in GLTB community. No longer will we be seen as outcasts, or see ourselves as outcasts, or less than others. It will say to the broader community that the human condition is broad, that being human can be expressed in many ways and that "normal" is to be human - not any particular type of human.

It will also speak to young people, and the people in their lives, that they can be who they want to be, that they don't have to hide their gender preference, they don't have to pretend to be someone they are not. They don't have to sneak off, feel guilty or ashamed or feel less than others.

It's no longer ok to deny one section of our society the same rights as others have, or say that one type of love is more right than another. The people that surround me - 95% of whom are heterosexual and in loving and caring relationships feel the same way that I do. They have never backed away from me and in fact held my head above water a number of times over the past couple of years.

I strongly urge the Members NSW Parliament to support legislative change to enable same sex couples to be married in the same way that heterosexual couples can. It's 2013, its seems odd that we are even debating this fundamental human right. It's time to be resolve this.

Sincerely yours,

Neville Dwyer

B.Teach (Early Childhood)