

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

**Name:** Mr Ashley Ubrihien

**Date received:** 15/02/2013

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The Hon. Niall Blair, MLC  
Chairman  
Standing Committee on Social Issues  
NSW Parliament, Macquarie Street,  
Sydney NSW 2000

Dear Mr Chairman

I am writing my submission in favour of legislative changes to allow marriage of two consenting adults whether they are of the same sex or gender diverse. It is my belief that in 2013 is entirely appropriate for the NSW Government to allow couples same sex or gender diverse couples to marry under NSW Law.

Community attitudes continue to evolve on social issues and I believe that this issue is no different. Whether it has been giving Indigenous people the right to vote or the decriminalisation of homosexuality the community is continuing to change its view on issues affected the rights and liberties of their fellow citizens.

The impact of changing the legislation in NSW in my view does several things; it affirms to young people that society accepts their relationships as of equal value and provides a legal framework for those who wish to affirm their relationship in their community.

The rates of mental illness amongst same sex attracted young people remains high with 44-49% of people responding to the longitudinal study "Private Lives" in 2005 indicating that they have suffered a major depressive episode in the past. Whilst allowing equal marriage is not the panacea to addressing all these mental health issues, it does provide a signal to same sex and gender diverse people that their relationship is valued and recognized by the community.

My own experience is that as a gay person you encounter prejudice in many instances in your life and it is important to me that people that wish to marry should have the right to do so. If anything I think more people committing to marriage will strengthen "the institution" rather than diminish it and pure economic terms it would provide a large boost for NSW economy.

Yours sincerely

**Ashley Ubrhien**