

**Submission
No 89**

INQUIRY INTO SAME SEX MARRIAGE LAW IN NSW

Name: Ms Roanna Harris

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To whom it may concern

In regards to the call for submissions regarding the issue of same sex marriages, I would like to offer my opinion on the subject. Most of the opposition to marriage equality for same sex is from religious opposition. There are several religious founded groups in vocal opposition of marriage equality for example the Australian Christian Lobby. I do not believe that their views are valid nor arguments adequate against equality of marriage, as all their arguments revolve around religious beliefs and scripture.

Unless I am horribly mistaken, Australia is a secular nation with a separation of church and state. Therefore religion should have no bearing on political legislation nor as an excuse for blatant discrimination. Of course as part of religious freedom they are entitled to their views, however much I may find them deplorable personally, but they should have no bearing on the choices and freedoms of others whose religious beliefs they do not share.

Why is it that our anti-discrimination laws protect against workplace discrimination, racial and religious discrimination but draw the line at marriage discrimination because of the views of religious bigots? I do not see how that is fair, nor secular, nor in keeping with the spirit and freedom of Australia. Why should love be discriminated against by legislation that supports outdated religious views that have no real arguments apart from the spouting of obsolete religious rhetoric especially when the main arguments against homosexuals come from the book of leviathan that also contains rules and guides no self respecting, honourable or moral person would tolerate, nor the vast majority of christians follow. Again I feel I should reiterate that as a Secular nation religious belief has no place at all in politics or infringing on other people's rights, freedom or happiness.

As someone who is bisexual myself I do not see a difference should I choose to marry a man should I find one whom I love enough to want to marry, and a woman about whom I feel the same. There is no difference in love or commitment or anything beyond genitalia that I can see in either scenario, and I am deeply offended that anybody should try to dictate who I can and cannot love, and who I can and cannot marry. I do not believe in christianity nor any other theism and I have a great problem with anyone of religious faith trying to push their beliefs upon me, and use legislation to dictate to me that I should follow what they see is acceptable in their religious beliefs. They are welcome to their beliefs whatever they may be, but they do not belong in a secular government and I do not agree with them at all.

In conclusion I believe that same sex marriages should be allowed, otherwise it is a gross miscarriage of justice and a flouting of people's rights and freedoms, and would say definitively that no Australia is not secular and that the Government does not protect the rights, freedoms, or interests of all it's people fairly, or equally.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Roanna Harris