

INQUIRY INTO SAME SEX MARRIAGE LAW IN NSW

Name: Name suppressed

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Partially Confidential

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Dear Committee Members,

Today I read that the British House of Commons, led by a conservative government, has voted in favour of marriage equality – 400 to 175.

I write in support of same sex marriage in my home state of NSW.

Ideally the Federal Parliament would amend the Marriage Act 1961 to achieve marriage equality across Australia. However, considering the lack of political support or bipartisanship in the Federal Parliament I fear that this might not be possible for some time and that, like the USA, state based legislation is the first step towards equality.

Legal advice has indicated that the Commonwealth does not have exclusive powers to legislate in this area.

I believe that it is important to protect churches and other religious groups to ensure that they are not forced to perform or host same sex marriages.

I believe that sex marriage in NSW would provide many benefits to the citizens of this State. It would:

- Strengthen existing legal recognition provided by NSW Relationships Register;
- Show that the State values all citizens equally and believes that same sex relationships are equal to heterosexual relationships. This would then have beneficial effects on stability of relationships, psychological wellbeing of homosexuals and would reduce discrimination over time;
- Provide a boost to the NSW economy from residents and visitors travelling from interstate and overseas to hold same sex weddings.

I believe that same sex marriage will increase the rights of homosexual people in NSW without taking any rights away those in a heterosexual relationship or marriage.

I recommend that the NSW parliament legislates for same sex marriage.