

To whom it may concern

Please be advised that I am a member of the Australian Marriage Celebrants Inc, as well as a member of the Australian Federation of Civil Celebrants Inc. I stand by their submissions made in relation to the Inquiry: Marriage Amendment (Celebrant Administration and Fees) Bill 2013 and the Marriage (Celebrant Registration Charge) Bill 2013.

Further, to emphasize my commitment to my appointment as an authorised Civil Marriage Celebrant and in doing so, adhering to our 'CODE OF PRACTICE' I include the following from my own experience ....

Addressing the Discrimination issue

Speaking from my experience, as a Civil Marriage Celebrant, I am privileged to marry couples and I look upon my role as a very significant and important part of the couples' Wedding Day.

Therefore, I prepare myself to the best of my ability, educating myself with required OPD, for which I pay for at my own expense.

I belong to two officially recognised Celebrant Associations, for which I pay an annual membership fee, at my own expense, this to ensure I am kept knowledgeable with latest amendments to the Marriage Act, Explanations pertaining to same, official documentation etc...

I am available for couples to contact me by phone or email, unlimitedly to ensure their Marriage ceremony is what they require.

I have state of the art equipment to ensure I comply with the Code of Practice and that the couples' ceremony is meaningful, in that every word uttered is heard by all witnesses present.

I attend their wedding ceremony at the venue of their choice. The couples can invite unlimited number of guests to their wedding.

Now considering the aforementioned, is it fair that "I" as a Civil Marriage Celebrant, along with my fellow colleagues, am to be "slugged" with the proposed registration fee solely, excluding Religious and Registry Office Celebrants?

Why am "I" being singled out, why am "I" being discriminated against? Why are religious celebrants and the Registry Office celebrants not being also charged a registration fee?

Further I have to promote my celebrant business, incurring advertising fees, borne solely by "me". "I" am asked to have a 'Safe - Confidential' office and storage, "I" supply and maintain, my computer/laptop, my filing system under lock and key all at my own expense. I have phone, fax and email communication all paid for solely by "me".

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Submission regarding Inquiry: Marriage Amendment (Celebrant Administration and Fees) Bill 2013 and the Marriage (Celebrant Registration Charge) Bill 2013.

Am I to understand by this Discrimination against Civil Marriage Celebrants that there is an attempt to wipe "me" out, thereby only retaining Religious and Registry Office Celebrants?

"I" strongly believe "I" am supplying a service to the community, which I have been told by couples is much valued, personal and caring.  
I therefore respectfully request this matter be re-considered and in all fairness make it that ALL Celebrants, (any person with the authority to conduct a legal marriage ceremony) pay the proposed registration fee.

Let us Civil Marriage Celebrants too feel valued and assured "we" contribute to the community in our capacity.

Thank you  
Jenny Butler-Grech CMC.,JP

Please note when I am referring to "I" I mean "Civil Celebrant"