

Dear Committee Secretary,

I am a Uniting Church minister and theologian who supports same-sex covenants for life, and would argue that the law should recognise and support these in the same ways it does marriage. I do not believe, however, that such covenants could be called 'marriage' in the theological sense because the theological definition has always included the potential for a couple to pro-create through the union of their physical bodies.

Theologically, marriage is based on, and lives from, the covenant relationship between God and God and the relationship with Israel and the church. And I would hope that any Christian theology of same-sex or transgendered unions would be so also. My point is that 'marriage' can be understood as one, but only one, form of the particularization of that covenant. There are others. I am wary of homogenizing all relationships involving love, commitment and sexual relations in the image of 'marriage'. I do not, therefore, support the expansion of our definition of marriage to include same-sex couples who cannot, even potentially, pro-create together.

I do, however, support legislation to legalize same-sex and transgendered unions involving love, commitment, and sexual relations, for life.

Sincerely

Garry Deverell (Rev Dr)