



## ***Report on the Sex Discrimination Amendment Bill tabled in Parliament today***

The House of Representatives Standing Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs has conducted an inquiry into the Sex Discrimination Amendment (Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Intersex Status) Bill 2013 and has tabled its report in Parliament today. The Bill proposes changes to the *Sex Discrimination Act 1984* (SDA) to:

- extend the protection from discrimination to the new grounds of sexual orientation, gender identity, and intersex status; and
- extend the existing ground of ‘marital status’ to ‘marital or relationship status’ to provide protection from discrimination for same-sex de facto couples.

On 21 March 2013 the Selection Committee referred the Bill to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs (the Committee) for inquiry and report, citing the following reasons for referral/principal issues for consideration:

- the adequacy of coverage of antidiscrimination protection, and
- whether the terminology is appropriate.

The Committee recognised that considerable consultation has gone on prior to the introduction of this Bill to the House, and that the provisions proposed are the enactment of recommendations made by the Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee in its inquiry into the Exposure Draft of the Human Rights and Anti-Discrimination (HRAD) Bill 2012. The Senate Committee concluded that there was unanimous agreement that the SDA be amended to extend protection from discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation, gender identity and intersex status, and for same-sex de facto couples.

The Chair of the Committee, Mr Graham Perrett MP, said that “the Committee has recommended that the House of Representatives pass this Bill because the protection of all Australians from discrimination is a core matter of social justice. The Committee considers that the proposed legislative changes are long overdue and will address gaps in the current anti-discrimination legal framework.”

Mr Perrett said “given the extensive consultation that has taken place regarding the measures contained in this Bill, and the expectation that the final sitting day of the 43<sup>rd</sup> Parliament will be 27 June 2013, this Committee urges the Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee to conclude its deliberations into this Bill as a matter of urgency so that the Bill may be considered by both Houses prior to the Parliament rising for the election.” Mr Perrett added “the changes proposed by this Bill are too important to be delayed for people who remain vulnerable and unprotected from discrimination.”

The report is available at [www.aph.gov.au/spla](http://www.aph.gov.au/spla). Printed copies will not be available.

For further information please visit the Committee website [www.aph.gov.au/spla](http://www.aph.gov.au/spla)

**For media comment**, please contact the Committee Chair, Mr Graham Perrett MP, on (07) 3344 2622 or 0423 280 131.

**For background information**, please contact the **Secretariat of the Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs**:

PO Box 6021  
PARLIAMENT HOUSE  
CANBERRA  
ACT 2600

Telephone: 02 6277 4969  
Facsimile: 02 6277 4427  
E-mail: [spla.reps@aph.gov.au](mailto:spla.reps@aph.gov.au)  
Website: [www.aph.gov.au/spla](http://www.aph.gov.au/spla)