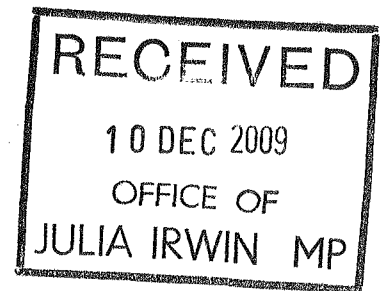




ATTORNEY-GENERAL  
THE HON ROBERT McCLELLAND MP



09/15950, MC09/20064

Ms Julia Irwin MP  
Chair  
Standing Committee on Petitions  
PO Box 6021  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

27 NOV 2009

*Julia*

Dear Ms Irwin

I refer to your letter dated 17 September 2009 seeking a written response to a petition submitted to your Committee requesting that 13 August each year be declared as National Marriage Day.

This petition suggests that recognising the contribution that intact, stable marriages make to the well-being of children and society is important. The Government is of the view that a range of factors contribute to supporting the well-being of children and society. For example, initiatives recognising and raising public awareness about human rights, the rights of children, the welfare of the family and the need for non discrimination.

The Government is aware that there are already a number of established observed national and international days that may raise awareness and recognise how people can and do contribute to the well-being of children and society. Examples of these are National Families Week (10-16 May), Anti-Poverty Week (14 – 20 August), International Youth Day (12 August) and International Human Rights Day, held on 10 December each year.

National Families Week in Australia, in particular, is designed to celebrate family diversity and recognise the many different family types existing throughout Australia. I understand that a key objective of National Families Week in 2009 was to encourage Australians to think about, acknowledge and respect the diversity of the family unit. The Government supports this initiative.

The Government does not support a particular day being declared an annual National Marriage Day.

I hope this information is of assistance to the Committee when considering this petition.

Yours sincerely

Robert McClelland