

From: James Magel [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, 18 April 2005 1:03 PM
To: Committee, FHS (REPS)
Subject: Overseas Adoption

Attention: Margaret Atkin
Inquiry Secretary
Adoption of Children from Overseas

Dear Margaret,

With respect to the Inquiry into Adoption of Children from Overseas, it is my deeply held concern that gay and lesbian couples and individuals continue to be allowed to bring adopted children into Australia from other countries.

It has been speculated that the government wishes to create law that would not recognise the overseas adopted child upon entry to Australia simply because of the sexual orientation of the adoptive parent. There are a number of problems with this.

Firstly, if this law were passed, it would be saying that a child - who would likely be from an orphanage - is not worthy of Australian recognition due to the sexual orientation of its adoptive parent(s). This is something the child has no control over.

Secondly, to create such a law is to further indoctrinate discrimination against same-sex people. It is in effect saying that gay and lesbian Australians are less equal than other Australians and that it is okay to treat them wrongly. The more the government legally endorses this type of behaviour the more it gives ammunition for hate crimes and persecution against sexual minorities.

Thirdly, to try to enforce such a law would be absurd. How on earth would you know whether the adoptive parent is gay or lesbian? How could you conclusively prove it? Single heterosexuals who adopt from overseas would immediately become suspect because they are not married or in a de facto relationship. Frankly, the government would be opening itself up to all kinds of lawsuits.

Fourthly, I can tell you that I have personally witnessed four adoptions of children from orphanages by same-sex couples that have worked out very well. These were older children (ages 3 to 5). The older you get the less likely you will ever be adopted from an orphanage. If you do some research on this, the children who remain in orphanages become the social outcasts of their society and have very few career options when they get older. Gay and lesbian people adopt the children that no one else wants to adopt. I am happy to say that, each of these four children have thrived beautifully over the years in the loving homes of same-sex parents.

Finally, just because people are gay or lesbian doesn't mean that the need to love and nurture a child does not exist. On the contrary, they are just like anybody else in this regard. There are very few adoption options for same-sex oriented Australians and to take overseas adoption away from them would be cruel both to them and to the children who would be missing out on great parents and a life outside of an orphanage.

Thank you for your consideration.

James R. Magel