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21 July 2008

Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee
 /o Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Honourable Members,

I am writing in opposition to the Family Law Amendment Bill 2008 which would allow both same-sex and other unmarried couples to access property and maintenance provisions currently available to married couples who divorce.

I do not agree with the replacement of references to 'married couples', 'husband', 'wife', and 'spouse' with other terms such as 'couple relationships' and 'partner' so as to treat de facto and same-sex relationships as equivalent to marriage.

Marriage as the union of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others, voluntarily entered into for life is foundational for society and the well being of its individuals and communities. Any erosion of the status of marriage, or elevation of other relationships to that of marriage has been and will be detrimental to he health of society as a whole.

The family courts are already over worked with divorce settlements without having to be burdened with the settlements of more casual de facto and/or same-sex relationships. Those entering into same-sex relationships could use contracts and civil law to protect their interests rather than being treated the same as married couples.

Australian society is based on Judeo-Christian principles, ethics and morality. Marriage and the family is foundational to Australian society and should not be undermined or eroded, nor should relationships that are not marriage be treated as such.

Yours truly,

Pastor Jim Overduin

Member Congregations of the

Lutheran Church
of Australia