



Sydney University Postgraduate Representative Association (SUPRA) wholeheartedly supports the amendment of the Marriage Act to allow same-sex couples the marriage rights that are taken for granted by heterosexual couples in Australia.

Sydney University Postgraduate Representative Association (SUPRA) is the representative organisation for postgraduate students of the University of Sydney. It is one of 34 student organisations in Australia dedicated to promoting the interests of postgraduate students. Established in 1974, SUPRA's constituency has grown to a point where today, over 16,000 students undertaking research and coursework degrees at a postgraduate level are able to access SUPRA's services.

SUPRA demands that the Federal Government reverse the amendment that the Howard Government made in 2004, defining marriage as between a man and a woman. This discrimination based on sexuality is totally divisive and causes untold heartaches and hardships for hundreds of thousands of people, gay or otherwise. Australia must grant equal marriage rights to all its citizens; state sanctioned homophobia must not be promoted by the highest level of government.

A Galaxy Poll conducted on the issue earlier this year showed that 60% of those surveyed were in favour of same-sex marriage. This included 64% of Labor voters and 50% of Coalition voters; with these figures surely the Federal Government needs to listen to what close to two thirds of Australians are asking. The recent National Day of Action for Same Sex Saturday, August 1st mirrored the poll drawing tens of thousands of supporters in capital cities all around Australia. These weren't just gays and lesbians, but their families, friends and loving supporters. The Federal Government needs to realise that it's out of step with what the majority of Australians want.

The recent raft of legislative changes that came in on July 1st 2009, such as the recognising of same-sex relationships by Centrelink, may seem progressive on the surface but all this does is reinforce the belief that gays and lesbians are second-class citizens. The fact that the Federal Government will recognise same-sex relationships for bureaucratic purposes yet not grant these couples full equal marriage rights is a slap in the face. By doing so the Government is tacitly supporting homophobia; if our own leaders are discriminating against its citizens it sends a clear

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message to the broader public that it's OK to be discriminatory also. This is clearly not on!

Equal rights for ALL Australians is long overdue.

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