

Senate Submission to:
Legal and constitutional Affairs Committee
'Marriage Equality' Bill

August 25, 2009

I would like to register my opposition to Senator Sarah Hanson-Young's so-called 'Marriage Equality' bill being presented on 28 August 2009.

Her bill would change the very meaning and definition of marriage so that any two people, regardless of gender, could marry. May I please remind the Senate that in 2004 both major parties agreed to insert the definition of marriage as the union of a man and a woman into the *Marriage Act*.

Senator Sarah Hanson-Young's bill seeks to not bring a so called "equality" but to fundamentally change what marriage is. Marriage is, not just by law but by intrinsic substance the union of one man and one woman. To deviate from that absolute is to change the definition of marriage itself.

A same-sex union that is legally called marriage will undermine marriage because it equates any loving relationship between any two consenting adults as "marriage". The aims of the bill seem to be to recognise 'freedom of sexuality' and to celebrate 'diversity', but these are not the values of marriage, which upholds commitment, fidelity, and the stable nurturing of children.

Australia must hold its ground on this issue of marriage. Other nations that have deviated from this bedrock definition have paid a heavy cost.

I found it interesting to note that within the details of the Bill the word "discrimination" is used. How can it be discrimination if law clearly defines that a marriage is between a man and a woman? That is not discriminatory, that is descriptive. This is much like the description of what legally makes a man a male and a woman a female. Can these definitions be changed because a woman feels that for her to not be referred to as a man is discriminatory? No. If a woman could legally be called a man then we would be redefining what a man is, so also if we redefined that marriage was between "two people" instead of between a "man and a woman" we would be changing what marriage actually is.

Sincerely

Christopher Twinn