

## **Submission to the Inquiry into the Marriage Equality Amendment Bill 2009**

I am writing in **support** of the Marriage Equality Amendment Bill 2009.

Marriage equality in Australia would mean the world to me.

Growing up, every little girl dreams about her wedding day – the dress, the flowers, the celebration, and the making of a life commitment to love and share your life with another person, and to have that love and commitment recognised by the law and our society. It saddens me so much that as the laws currently are, this will never be a reality for me.

Growing up, little girls don't dream about superannuation, Centrelink payments or tax reform (although these are all important), and we don't dream about having our relationship legally recognised in an alternative and 'lesser' manner, such as a relationship register. When we think of our future, what we think of is marriage.

I love Melbourne, and Australia will always be my home. My partner and I contribute to society – I work for a not-for-profit and my partner works at the Melbourne Theatre Company. We participate in all the wonderful cultural festivals and events that Melbourne has to offer. We own an apartment in the city, spend the holidays with our families, and love our pet cat.

Yet it saddens me greatly that being able to get married in the city I call home is not an option for me – the same way I'd feel if I was told I wasn't able to eat in a restaurant because I'm Asian or not apply for a job because I am a woman.

The Marriage Equality Amendment Bill would bring equality to a segment of the Australian population that lives, eats, breathes and works among us, so that everyone is treated equal regardless of who they grow up to fall in love with.

For a country that prides itself on giving everyone a fair go, we must not continue to discriminate against a proportion of our own citizens. And as a progressive and inclusive country, we must find the courage to forge ahead with the same social reforms we are witnessing across the globe as more and more countries legalise same-sex marriage (eg. Canada, South Africa, Spain, some states in the USA, Sweden etc).

I strongly urge you to support the Marriage Equality Amendment Bill – for the future of Australia.