

## **Marriage Equality Amendment Bill 2009**

I am an Australian and I believe in giving everyone a fair go and treating everyone with the same respect, we are a Country that is full of different nationalities, people from everyone corner of this earth, we welcome them with open arms and give them the opportunity to be a part of this 'lucky Country'.

We all know the difference between right and wrong, defying a group of people from the same rights as everyone else is wrong. We have seen our Government apologise in the past for atrocities to the stolen generation, all I am asking is to be treated the same as everyone else.

A marriage certificate allows same-sex partners to prove their relationship status if challenged. This contrasts with defacto couples who must prove they fit a range of criteria before their legal rights are secure. This is particularly important in emergency situations. It is also important for same-sex partners because continued prejudice against same-sex relationships can lead to a denial of rights.

Same-sex partners are not equal under the law, or in the eyes of society, if they cannot marry. The Marriage Act continues to enshrine and foster discrimination against same-sex partners as long as it prohibits same-sex marriage. Opposite-sex partners have a choice of marrying or remaining defacto partners, a choice not open to same-sex partners.

Married partners have immediate access to all relationship rights, entitlements, protections and responsibilities. This contrasts with defacto couples who must cohabit for a certain period before they have rights and protections.

Denying same-sex partners the right to marry sends out the message that these partners are not capable of the love and commitment that is often associated with marriage.

My name is David MacFadyen and all I want to do is to be proud to say I am Australian; my Government treats me with the respect and gives me the same opportunities it gives its entire people.