

Dear Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee,

This is our submission to your inquiry into marriage equality. We also fully endorse the submission made by Australian Marriage Equality in favour of the *Marriage Equality Amendment Bill 2009*.

My wife and I chose to be married overseas - just the two of us. The way we chose to be married was an extension of how we live our lives: a little planned, a little spontaneous, a little independent, a little adventurous, and a whole lot of fun! It is a day we will never forget and one that brings us great joy whenever we share the story with friends and family.

Our friends and chose to get married in a little country town in - lots of friends and family travelled to the town for the event. The way they chose to get married was also an extension of how they live their lives: celebratory and with a great warmth. It was a fantastic weekend - one that still brings smiles to the faces of all those who joined in this beautiful occasion.

My parents chose to get married in their hometown of - a traditional wedding. The way they chose to get married was also an extension of how they lived their lives: thoughtful with an eye always on the future. My mother passed away a few months short of their fiftieth wedding anniversary - the recollection of their wedding day is one of the few things that truly brings joy to my fathers grieving and lonely heart.

My friends and would like to choose to get married. The way they would choose to get married would also be an extension of how they live their lives: well planned, accommodating, generous, loving and inclusive. It would be a fabulous day - one that would linger forever in the hearts and minds of all who attended. But and don't get to make this choice. and aren't allowed to create these memories for their families, friends, or themselves. and rights only extend so far.

You have a choice. You can choose to extend and rights and memories - the rights and memories that most of us take for granted. Please support the *Marriage Equality Amendment Bill 2009*.

Evan Hancock