

Dear Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee,

I fully endorse the submission made by Australian Marriage Equality in favour of the Marriage Equality Amendment Bill 2009.

In a published document entitled “**Australia: Seeking human rights for all**”, the [Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade](#) states that:

1. Australia promotes and protects human rights at home and abroad;
2. Australia’s commitment to human rights is enduring and that
3. The protection and promotion of the human rights encapsulated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is vital to global efforts to achieve lasting peace and security, and freedom and dignity for all.

Yet, systemic discrimination of persons on the basis of sexual orientation or preference is further encouraged by legislative reluctance to allow marriage of same sex couples as a matter of civil right, notwithstanding :

1. That the arguments against same sex marriage is devoid of any merit in present day Australia, and
2. That it is sheer hypocrisy to claim that Australia is committed to the aims and purposes of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights unless our laws and policies become progressive and reflect changing social attitudes.

The opposition to same marriage sex marriage has been articulated in a number of manner and packaging but is mainly rooted within the perspective that demonized a person simply on the basis of his or her sexual orientation or preference. The myths, lies, and distortions about gay men and lesbians has a common theme: “ they are bad people. These bad people have no right to be married. These bad people cannot be good parents because they would raise children to be deviants like them.” There are many, but I offer you one evidence that this is not true.

My sister and I were raised by my openly lesbian aunt since I was three years old. My sister became a successful and careered mother of two sons in Austria where she is also an active lay leader in the Catholic ministry for the Filipino migrant communities in Vienna. The world’s greatest dyke in my eyes who was severely illiterate supported my schooling, including the four years I spent in a seminary to study for the priesthood. I eventually became a teacher, police officer and lawyer, and best of all, father of three children (two students and an Australian soldier) with my wife of 25 years.

My late aunt probably had not even entertained the possibility of getting married with her partner because they fell victim to an era and culture that did not know any better. I like to think that the current breed of Australian parliamentarians could and would now put an end to every specie of bigotry.

Yours faithfully