

Withhold\_Name: Yes

Confidential: No

Submission: Dear Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee,

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

I would like to imagine that, in the future, when my partner and I wish to show the strength of our commitment to each other, that we would be able to do this in our own backyard and not need to travel internationally in order to participate in a commitment ceremony which would not even be recognised in our native country.

Homosexuals have been discriminated against for many decades by Australian law, and although recently governments have been making attempts to reverse this discrimination, the fact is this will never be so while gay marriage is illegal.

Historically, marriage is not a Christian tradition. For many centuries prior to Christianity, marriage occurred, having been observed in cultures such as the Greeks which predate Christianity. Yet one of the main arguments against gay marriage is that marriage is surrounded by Christian ideals and values, and while in our culture this is somewhat true, it has not always, and need not always be so.

I urge you to think about this from a homosexual's perspective: all we want is to be seen as equals by our society and our law. To maintain this ban would be to send a message to society that discriminating against homosexuals is fair, just, right, and will only assist in maintaining the divide which stands between heterosexuals and homosexuals, a divide which has existed for many centuries.

Please help to close this divide.

Yours sincerely