

Dear Senator Crossin,

I would like to make a submission to the Inquiry into the Marriage Equality Amendment Bill 2009 in support of marriage equality for same-sex couples.

The *Marriage Act 1961* (Cth) is a civil law which applies to all Australians. I believe the *Marriage Act* should be amended to ensure same-sex couples have equal rights to marry in Australia. I believe section 88EA of the *Marriage Act* should be repealed so that overseas same-sex marriages are recognised in Australia in the same way as opposite-sex marriages between consenting adults.

I'm actually heterosexual but it angers me greatly that in an economically developed democracy so many of my friends and family don't have the same right to access one of our basic social institutions if they chose to as I do. Such backwards, fear-inspired openly discriminatory legislation is embarrassing for Australia. It also reflects the maturity, or immaturity, of our political system. Allowing a group of citizens to be treated as second class citizens weakens all our claims to civil rights. By changing this legislation and giving lesbian and gay couples access to a basic social institution like marriage, we strengthen that institution and all our civil rights.

Sincerely,

Laura Kelly.

It is time to ensure that discrimination against same-sex couples in the *Marriage Act* is removed.