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**Inquiry into the Same-Sex Relationship (Equal Treatment in
Commonwealth Laws-Superannuation) Bill 2008**

I am writing to give my support to this Bill and full equality for those in same-sex relationships when it comes to superannuation entitlements.

In lieu of same-sex marriage (which I, other gay activists and members of the gay community support), this proposed reform would go at least some of the way to rectify some of the inequalities many Australian citizens have put up with simply because they are gay and happen to be in same-sex relationships.

The Bill, if it becomes legislation, will amend a number of Commonwealth Acts in favour of same-sex couples in regard to superannuation and, importantly, provide protection for surviving partners and any children in the relationship in the likely case of one member of the couple predeceasing the other. For too long, it has been assumed in Commonwealth legislation that there are only opposite sex couples and their children. This assumption is starting to change thanks to the efforts of the gay movement over the last several decades (with help from its allies in the Parliament). However, it is only now that significant amendments to legislation around superannuation in favour of same-sex couples are being proposed. In other words, this Bill is long overdue. I hope other Commonwealth legislation is amended to include same-sex couples. But that, of course, will be the subject of future inquiries.

Any reading of the Bill will make it obvious that it is nothing like same-sex marriage legislation. Nor, if the proposed legislation is ultimately successful, will it disadvantage opposite sex couples. No doubt this inquiry will receive submissions using scare tactics along those lines. However, such alarmist views cannot alter the reality of what this Bill is clearly about.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to support this proposed legislation. I hope to be able to discuss my submission with you in greater detail.

David Skidmore,
7 July 2008.