

GILLIAN APPLETON

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18 July 2008

Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Senators

I am writing to support the Same-Sex Relationships Bill currently under consideration, and to urge that there be no further delay in passing this Bill. I am a widow with many homosexual friends and I am aware that any further delay in passing this admirable Bill will cause distress and hardship, especially for older people in same sex relationships.

This Bill follows the recommendation of the Human Rights and Equality Opportunity Commission (HREOC) Report recommendation that same-sex couples should be given the same standing and entitlements as heterosexual de facto couples, and I wholeheartedly support this recommendation.

I reject the suggestion of some members of Parliament and other lobbyists that the Bill weakens or undermines the legally established definition of marriage. I endorse the statement to Parliament of Liberal MP, Petro Georgiou, that *With respect to any concerns that this Bill devalues marriage, I have to say frankly that these concerns are unfounded.*

I do not believe that carer and other relationships such as co-habiting siblings should be equated with same-sex relationships. I fully support the Attorney-General's plan to consider these and similar forms of relationship in making government provision for carers.

I urge the Senate to pass this legislation, in its present form, as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely  
Gillian Appleton (by email)