

Rainbow Labor (NSW) believes that LGBT Australians deserve full equality before the law. The proposed legislation is an important and historic step towards achieving that goal.

The Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission gathered hundreds of personal stories about people affected by systemic discrimination on the basis of their sexuality. These stories exposed state-sanctioned discrimination in areas like superannuation, taxation, Medicare, family law, veteran's affairs and more.

Rainbow Labor (NSW) believes that it is important to remove this discrimination for the couples affected on a daily basis, and also to demonstrate Australia's commitment to equality for the LGBT community in line with our international treaty obligations under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

These laws have broad community support (71% according to the Galaxy poll last year). They are fully costed – in fact they contribute an extra \$66 million to the Federal Budget. Delivering equality for same-sex couples is beneficial to the couples themselves, the Government's budget and its treaty obligations.

The legislation currently being examined by the Committee has been a long time coming. We have been told for the last twelve years that equality in superannuation for same-sex couples would be too expensive. In fact the reason the legislation is now being delayed is an uncoded proposal to expand it to include interdependent couples.

In reality the only reason for delaying this legislation further is a rejection of its aims: equality between same-sex and heterosexual defacto couples. Rainbow Labor (NSW) supports the proposed legislation and urges the Parliament to do so as well.

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