Clover Moore
MEMBER FOR SYDNEY

Electorate office

58 Oxford Street Paddington NSW 2021
T 02 9360 3053 **F** 02 9331 6963
E sydney@parliament.nsw.gov.au

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Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Secretary

Same-Sex Relationship (Equal Treatment in Commonwealth Laws – Superannuation) Bill 2008

I write in support of this Bill, which seeks to provide equal legal treatment for same sex couples in access to and benefit from superannuation and through the Family Court.

As State Member of Parliament for more than 20 years, I have represented a significant gay and lesbian population, and learned about their experience of discrimination and homophobia. Government has a vital leadership role in promoting acceptance and community harmony, and preventing discrimination and verbal abuse and violence, which result from intolerance and prejudice.

The Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission's *National Inquiry into Discrimination against People in Same Sex Relationships* highlighted 58 pieces of Commonwealth legislation that failed to treat all Australians fairly. This discrimination causes distress, financial loss and exclusion for same sex couples and their children.

I strongly support equal legal treatment for lesbians and gay men and urged the Commonwealth Government to remedy this systemic discrimination against same sex couples.

Same sex couples are unable to use superannuation contribution splitting, reducing their overall income and their capacity to provide for their own retirement. The HREOC Inquiry found that current superannuation laws and the policies of superannuation funds prevent same sex partners from inheriting their partner's entitlements.

I am pleased that this Bill also proposes provisions that include children involved in same sex couple families in access to superannuation.

I believe that there is no justification for discriminatory treatment and urge prompt law reform to provide equal legal treatment of same sex couples.

Yours sincerely

Clover Moore
Member for Sydney