



WE WANT EQUAL RIGHTS FOR SAME-SEX COUPLES

Café Lounge is asking you to join us in supporting the equal rights campaign for same sex couples in Australia.

Our first aim is to gather as many submissions to the Same-Sex Relationship Bill 2008 to be sent to the Senate by 25 July 2008.

SO WHAT DOES THE BILL DO?

The Bill aims to remove discrimination against same-sex couples and their children in Commonwealth superannuation schemes, by ensuring same-sex partners have equal rights to reversionary super benefits.

OPPOSITION TO THE BILL

The Australian Christian Lobby (ACL) is leading the charge AGAINST this legislation, arguing that terminology in the Bill which refers to "couples" (including same-sex couples) undermines the status given to married relationships.

Rather than recognising our relationships as "couple relationships", the ACL is pushing for an "interdependency" category to include same-sex couples and other relationships, such as two siblings or two friends who live together.

This is not acceptable to us!

In 2004, the ACL collected over *16,000 submissions* that supported defining marriage as exclusively between a man and a woman. These submissions ensured the success of the Marriage Ban.

Here is our opportunity to start reversing this wrong. Our aim, for one spouse to be able to receive superannuation benefits from their life long partner, has nothing to do with religion, as the ACL view it. It is a basic human right.

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

Please fill in the following letter. Don't forget to include personal stories about how this legislation will affect you, or those around you.

Submissions should be handed back to Café Lounge, via post, email or in person:

Café Lounge
277 Golbourn St.
Surry Hills 2010

cedric@cafelounge.com.au

We will then organise for them to be sent out to the Senate Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs in Canberra.

SUBMISSIONS DUE SUNDAY 20TH JULY!

Subject: Submission to the Same-Sex Relationship Bill 2008

Sunday, July 13, 2008

Dear Mr Hallahan,

I would like to thank the Committee for the opportunity to make a submission into the Same-Sex Relationships (Equal Treatment in Commonwealth Laws - superannuation) Bill 2008. I fully support the objectives of the Bill, to remove discrimination against same-sex couples and their children in relation to Commonwealth superannuation and related benefits.

I believe this legislation is long overdue. It is a critical first step in providing legal and financial equality for same-sex couples. I hope to see future legislation implementing the remaining recommendations contained in the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission's Same Sex: Same Entitlements report.

I support the Bill's inclusion of married, heterosexual and same-sex de facto couples under the straightforward and practical category of "couple relationship". Same-sex de facto couples should be treated in the same way as heterosexual de facto couples.

I reject suggestions that same-sex couples should be recognised as "interdependents", along with other caring non-couple relationships. The Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission says that past interdependency definitions in private superannuation have failed to provide same-sex couples with real equality. Interdependency definitions do not give the clear and certain protection that de facto definitions provide.

I support the recognition of children with same-sex parents under the Bill. This definition acknowledges the reality of family diversity in Australia. The legal recognition of families and the equal access to entitlements is in the best interests of children.

I support this legislation because...

I urge the Committee to commend the Bill to parliament in order to ensure that the discrimination faced by same-sex couples can be removed as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a stylized 'A' followed by a long horizontal stroke that curves upwards at the end.