
To the Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs Department of the Senate
PO Box 6100 Parliament House Canberra ACT 2600 Australia

IN SUPPORT OF THE SAME-SEX RELATIONSHIPS BILLS

My same-sex partner of five years is a New Zealand citizen. As such he's able to sponsor family members for temporary residence into Australia (subclass 461). Among the eligible family members listed is the "spouse of a New Zealand citizen". However this is defined as a "person of opposite sex" and therefore does not apply to a person of the same sex.

Also, when applying under the Employer Sponsored Migration (ENS), the current legislation allows the sponsored person to include his/her spouse in the application, but again this benefit is not extended to same sex partners. These need to apply separately as "interdependent partners" with additional costs involved.

This point was already highlighted in the HREOC Report addressing the discrimination towards gay & lesbian couple and I believe that the new bill covers this point and amends the definition of spouse to include same sex partners.

Yours Sincerely

Giorgio Petti