

Industrial Relations and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022

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Submitted by: Fair Go for Queensland Women
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Email: eetc@parliament.qld.gov.au

Committee Secretary

Education, Employment and Training Committee

PARLIAMENT HOUSE QLD 4000

RE: Industrial Relations and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022

Thank you for the opportunity to make submission to the Committee in relation to the abovementioned Bill.

Fair Go for Queensland Women (FG4QW) was formed in 2018 in response to worrying trends related to the conflation of sex and gender, and apparent elevation of gender over sex in social discourse, policy and legislation. We seek to interrogate and consider issues from a radical feminist framework. We firmly believe that sex, as an objective and immutable characteristic must be retained in public policy and legislation and continue to be a primary characteristic for consideration. As such, we respectfully submit the following feedback regarding the Bill.

In the Introductory Speech, Hon Member Grace Grace MP notes sex and gender separately multiple times but then refers to amendments (s173 and 406Z primarily) requiring the obtaining and reporting of data related to the distribution of employees based upon 'gender', the 'gender' pay gap and factors contributing to the 'gender pay gap'.

Sex (a reproductive category), gender (a societal role), and gender identity (an inner sense of self) are not synonymous"¹

We respectfully submit that what is required is data collection and reporting based upon both sex and 'gender'.

Similarly, we submit that amendments seeking to remove sex-based terms from the instrument are counter-productive to efforts to attend to the sex-based needs of women¹. 'Maternity leave' and other sex-based terms remain relevant for the vast majority and relates to far more than leave that can and should be made available to spouses or partners. By removing sex-based terms, there is a risk that the needs of women both pre and post-partum will be ignored or not effectively attended to. De-sexing language around this area of women's lives has been discussed in the attached article¹.

We trust that all can agree that the Mother-Baby dyad can and should be recognised and attended to as of primary importance. 'Maternity' is a term that reflects this respect and consideration. Removing language that respects women and their important as well as physically and emotionally demanding role in gestation, birthing and primary care (including breastfeeding, which is a significant undertaking in and of itself) of infants is not in the interests of Mothers, their babies, their families or the larger community.

While it is an admirable aim to hope that partners will be involved to an extent approaching that of Mothers, this is not, to our knowledge, reflected in the data. As such, we believe that sex-based terms such as 'maternity' must remain in the legislation to appropriately attend to the needs of Mothers, their babies, families and communities and also ensure that the consideration and respect Mothers deserve (and need) is recognised in law.

We respectfully suggest the retention of 'maternity' and adding 'birth related' in all relevant places. Similarly, we submit that 'she' should be retained and wording added to attend to those female individuals who claim alternative pronouns. We believe this will best attend to the needs of all, while still respecting and recognising in law the sex-based needs of women.

Thank you again for the opportunity to be involved in this process. We look forward to the progression of this Bill.

Kind regards,

A small, square image of a handwritten signature in black ink on a light-colored background. The signature appears to be 'Stephanie Hughes'.

Stephanie Hughes

On behalf of Fair Go for Queensland Women

(contact details supplied separately)

1: For further clarification regarding the concerns regarding 'inclusive language' and the interests of women, specifically in the context of pregnancy, birth, lactation, breastfeeding and newborn care, please see:

[Frontiers | Effective Communication About Pregnancy, Birth, Lactation, Breastfeeding and Newborn Care: The Importance of Sexed Language \(frontiersin.org\)](https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.00000/full)