

Health and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2023

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IWD Meanjin Brisbane

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We write to oppose the Qld Government intention to remove the word 'woman' from the Termination of Pregnancy legislation 2018

IWD Meanjin Brisbane is a feminist network that campaigns for the defence and extension of women's, girls', lesbians' sex-based rights – **all** women's rights are sex-based.

We conduct public events to bring together women who work to defend single sex spaces such as changerooms, public toilets, rape crisis support groups and single sex sports, achievement awards, language. Included in our public events is an annual women's liberation conference and rally and march to acknowledge International Women's Day. The conference and IWD rally are the only events we are aware of that are banned from inclusion in the Qld Government's March Calendar of Events to recognise Women's Week.

The replacement of the word 'woman' with 'person' in Qld's abortion legislation is being done on the grounds of 'inclusion', according to the Qld Government. To include men in language around abortion is nothing short of ludicrous. No man has ever wanted an abortion, no man ever will. Men cannot become pregnant, only women and girls have pregnancies. Abortion is the right of every girl and woman who wants one, the right should not be held up to ridicule by pretending men also become pregnant and may want abortions. To do this, as the Qld Government intends to, is to trivialise women's health and women's rights.

The Government argues 'transmen' must be included in the legislation. They already are, 'transmen' are women and girls. There are only two sexes: women and men. 'Transman' and 'transwoman' are based on identity not sex. Pregnancy, whether it is wanted or unwanted, occurs because of biology not 'identity'. It matters for nought that many different 'gender identities' are being created, women who campaign for women's rights don't really care how many gender identities the Qld Government believes in because gender and gender 'identity' are different from biological sex.

While the Qld Government pretends removing the word 'woman' from abortion legislation is an 'inclusive' gesture, in fact it is exclusive. The intention is to exclude 'woman' and comes from the demands of gender ideologues. Gender ideology is a faith-based view that claims men can become women on desire, it isn't based in biological reality. While a liberal point of view accepts the right of anyone to support faiths and religions of any persuasion, this ought to be conditional ie as long as one's faith does not impact on other people. This is where State support for faith-based gender ideology comes unstuck because gender ideology erases the rights of women, girls, lesbians, children, gays. The separation of Church (faith) and State is a long held principle. It is currently being eroded by the Qld Government which passes legislation according to the dictates of gender ideology and its backers, the big corporates. The word 'woman' needs to be retained in abortion legislation.

Anna McCormack

For IWD Meanjin Brisbane.