

From:  
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## INDIVIDUAL SUBMISSION to the LEGAL AFFAIRS AND COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE

### RE: Relationships (Civil Partnerships) and Other Acts Amendment Bill 2015

Mr. Mark Furner MP  
Chair  
Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee

I wish to make a Submission on the above mentioned Bill.

Using the points stated in the referred Bill to the committee for detailed consideration.....

1. The title *Relationship Act 2011* should be restored to the title of *Civil Partnership Act* as previously used.

COMMENT: I consider this part and parcel of the public recognition that the Qld Government and subsequent Laws are seen to acknowledge committed partnerships of all couples wanting to register their relationship in line with heterosexual couples who are able to do so at the present time. A civil partnership signifies a couple's binding commitment to one another, rather than being a registered relationship – ie., in the eyes of some, just for the sake of administration and convenience. The Bill would restore the term 'civil partnership' throughout the wording of the Act, including, in its title.

**The terminology – *registered relationships* is too ambiguous and demeaning of a couple's relationship.**

2. Legal recognition of a couple's relationship through Registration of the relationship with the Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages.

COMMENT: A couple in a registered Civil Partnership, deserve the legal recognition of their relationship by the resources that use Births Deaths and Marriages records, and also in regards to family history, family relationships, and other matters relating to the couple's personal history.

3. Restoration of the provision in the *Civil Partnership Act 2011* for an adult couple of any gender to hold an official partnership ceremony as part of the formal process of becoming a civil partnership.

COMMENT: I agree with the Attorney-General – Hon. YM D’Arth, that an official ceremony is the public and legal acknowledgment that a couple long for, and should be entitled to, to recognize their relationship. To just ‘register’ over the counter their relationship, as it now stands, denies that couple the dignity and celebration of declaring their love and commitment and is not about what is fair, equal and supportive in today’s world.

To have the choice of a civil ceremony as well official registration of their partnership, OR to choose only to register their partnership without the civil ceremony, should be acceptable to all parties.

4. The Bill would restore the provisions that applied under the *Civil Partnerships Act 2011* that governed the process of “providing Notice in the approved form of their intention to the civil partnership Notary and at least one adult witness”.

COMMENT: I agree, but I do feel that there should be at least two (2) adult witnesses.

5. The appointment of Civil Partnership Notaries:

COMMENT: Agree that -

- the Qld BDM be responsible for appointing Civil Partnership Notaries, taking into consideration that the Notary has already gone through a precise training program to become a civil marriage celebrant.
- that Civil Partnership Notaries pay any annual registration fee and to provide an annual return updating their eligibility information.
- The bill should require regulation and scrutinization of behavioural standards of Civil Partnership Notaries.

IN SUMMARY: I strongly agree that the provisions of the original Civil Partnership Act 2011 be fully restored with any amendments added that promote a fairer and more equitable recognition of committed relationships between two people (ie., a couple) regardless of gender.