

Submission to oppose the new bill introduced by Shannon Fentiman.

Earlier last month, Queensland Minister for Women, Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence, Shannon Fentiman introduced a new bill, under which a person will no longer be required to undergo sexual reassignment surgery to formally register a change of sex.

Such legislation will effectively allow men to self-identify into female-only activities, spaces and services, including sports, prisons, bathrooms, and refuges.

Governments are bending over backwards to try to be seen as inclusive, to win the popular vote, however, by doing so they are consequently widening the divide.

One of the major concerns about the impact of trans activism is the loss of safe spaces for women and girls generally. This includes not only traditionally sex segregated spaces such as bathrooms, change rooms and hospital wards, but also hard-won concessions achieved by the women's liberation movement such as women's refuges, women's health centres, courthouse safe rooms, women's libraries and women's rooms at universities. Women will lose the safe spaces and services to any individual who claims to be female. This ignores the reality of voyeurs, exhibitionists, rapists and paedophiles that actively use these changes in the law as an opportunity to engage in sexual misconduct targeting women and children. There are in fact reports of sex offenders who assume a female identity to commit sexual offences against women and girls and/or to evade detection.

Enabling the alteration of birth certificates in any manner amounts to a changing of history - always something that should be carefully considered - but in the manner proposed it will have the consequence that individuals who were born men, and who now identify as female, with or without male genitals, will have the right to be accepted as women in all contexts and all respects. Aside from anything else, a loosening of requirements for the alteration of birth certificates makes it impossible to preserve women only spaces and protect women from abusive or criminal intentions. This open access to women's spaces has significant consequences in many contexts.

One particular concern that has been raised is the safety of women prisoners. There are increasing demands by male prisoners who identify as women to be transferred from a male to a female prison. Calls for the placement of transgender individuals in a prison of their choosing arguably ignores the safety implications for female inmates and the gendered nature of violent and sexual crime. The danger to female inmates was demonstrated earlier this year in Britain when a double rapist Martin Ponting, now identifying as Jessica Winfield, was transferred to a female prison despite still having a penis intact. The prisoner was segregated after making inappropriate advances to female prisoners.

One difficulty has been the reports of transgendered male to female individuals who enter exclusively female spaces, including lesbian groups, where they make sexual advances on others and claim discrimination when they find themselves rejected. They refer to their difficulties as ‘the cotton ceiling’. Legislation that legitimises gender identity and allows men who seek to be women to have all the rights of women, directly conflicts with the rights of women born and raised as females. Enabling men who wish to identify as women to be treated in all respects as women by law, risks undermining institutions and laws that have been hard fought for and established over time for the express purpose of protecting the human rights of women and girls.

These changes to law and policy fail to acknowledge the ongoing reality of male violence. These changes also deny women the right to have meetings and spaces exclusively for women who were born and raised female and will thereby impede their ability to organize politically and advance causes. They will undermine temporary special measures or affirmative action strategies that have been put in place to redress the disadvantages experienced by females, and may work to reverse progress made in terms of women’s participation in political and cultural life through sport and leadership positions.

There is concern that transgender activism can often be a disguised form of men’s rights activism that it is largely focused on the liberation of males from oppressive masculinity – regardless of the cost to women.

The cold biological truth is that sex changes are impossible. Every single cell of the human body remains coded with one’s birth gender for life.

A must for those reading these submissions is to view the link below.

info@womensforumaustralia.org>

In conclusion, women have fought and are still fighting for the right to feel safe. I will be calling on Shannon Fentiman to resign her portfolios as she has no right to be the Minister for Women.

Jan Bewes.

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