

**Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Bill 2022**  
**Legal Affairs and Safety Committee**  
**Submission: Nerissa Pace**

I do NOT support the erasure of females as a sex class and therefore I absolutely do not support the Minister for Women, Shannon Fentiman's, Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Bill 2022.

Firstly, I simply don't believe *anyone* should be permitted to alter their birth certificate – in any way. It is a record that documents the birth of a person, an historical document, and any alterations legally falsify it. Creating a legal fiction.

Humans are sexually dimorphic – we are all born either male or female. That is simple biology and fact. Meantime, "non-binary" is an anti-scientific identity, it's not a third sex.

Humans cannot change sex; it is immutable and present in our DNA in every single cell in our body. Why should some individuals be allowed to change the SEX marker on their birth certificate to reflect some intangible, ideological "gender identity"? It's prioritising subjective feelings above objective reality.

Secondly, in introducing this Bill to parliament, the Minister for Women stated:

*"In developing the bill, we have carefully considered the experiences of LGBTIQ+ stakeholders, the difficulties they face and the recommendations they made in order to get these reforms right. Quite simply—we listened and this bill is the result."*

So, in other words, in developing this Bill, Minister Fentiman admits that she only considered the needs of this minority group and ignored the valid concerns of women, who make up 50% of her constituency.

Another way we know this to be true, is by the Honourable Shannon Fentiman's actions in blocking women like me from her official MP Facebook account where we were participating in civil discourse which affects our daily lives. The Minister even blocked some of us, like Sall Grover, from her official Attorney General email account.

This doesn't sound like the behaviour of an elected representative in a democratic society. It certainly doesn't sound very honourable. It sounds more like the behaviour of a minister in a dictatorship or autocratic regime. Doesn't the Minister for Women have a ministerial responsibility to hear and listen to women?

On introducing this Bill to parliament, the Minister also stated, "The changes will not significantly impact people who are opposed to them".<sup>ii</sup> Namely women.... Many, many women, and our allies strongly disagree with that.

I personally have a particular interest in sport. It is so good for girls and women to play sport – there's not only the obvious health benefits, but it also builds self-esteem and self-worth along with social skills, and there's even a study linking career success with sports participation showing that 94% of female CEOs and executives play sport.<sup>iii</sup>

The whole purpose of the female sport category was to give women & girls a fair and level playing field. So that they could excel and compete against other females. Female bodies are different to

male bodies after all – there’s around 6500 differences in fact.... But if any male can legally change his birth certificate to say female – then the female sport category ceases to exist. This will impact the lives of hundreds and thousands of QLD girls and women who participate in sport from the amateur right through to the elite levels.

One factor which affects female athletes and not their male counterparts is menstruation – which only occurs in females. As the legend Aussie weightlifting champion Deborah Lovely-Acason pointed out at the recent public information session outlining the harms of self-ID, held here in Brisbane - female athletes must adjust their training when they have their period – every month for a few days, or maybe a week. That’s because due to different hormones in their bodies at this time they’re more prone to injury, they’re not as strong and they can’t train as hard as a result. So, if you look at the 4-year lead up to each Olympic Games as an example, female athletes lose a whole year of training due to having their period.<sup>iv</sup>

Shannon Fentiman, along with every QLD MP, was invited to this information session to hear from concerned women. Not one bothered to come along to hear women speak or to speak with women.

The fact is if any man or boy can change his birth certificate to say he is female, then women and girls lose their right to fair and meaningful sporting competition. Sport is utterly meaningless without fair competition. Women and girls also lose their right to single-sex female changing facilities and accommodations.

So, what’s happening is one group is being given a particular right – to change the sex on their birth certificate – and this results in the loss of a multitude of rights for girls and women.

All these issues and more have been pointed out to the Minister for Women, by many different QLD women. We have highlighted this collision of rights, but our voices have been ignored.

Minister Fentiman is either wilfully ignorant, plain foolish or utterly corrupt if she thinks that predatory males aren’t already taking advantage of self-ID here and overseas. In introducing this Bill to the parliament, she had the audacity to say that:

*“... some groups will try to cloak their transphobia in the guise of women’s safety—making claims about trans women accessing women’s spaces, including change rooms or even domestic violence shelters. I want to be clear: there is no evidence, domestically or internationally, to support these outrageous claims.”*

We call you out Shannon. There’s plenty of evidence of exactly this and it’s only growing, as this sort of legislation emboldens MALE predators.<sup>v</sup> How are women supposed to tell the difference between a MAN and a “transwoman”? The answer is, we can’t. How can women tell the difference between a man and a male predator? The answer is, we can’t!

These spaces are female-only for a reason. These spaces are not meant for males, regardless of their “gender identity”.

In the past there was a social contract that female-only spaces were off-limits for men – but self-ID gives predatory men a free pass. We can thank the Minister for Women for actively placing women and girls in dangerous situations and jeopardising their safety and wellbeing. All in the name of an ideology that the majority of QLDers do not subscribe to – in fact we absolutely reject it.<sup>vi</sup>

The QLD government is pushing a lie – the lie that men can be women, that males can be females. This is destroying women and girls’ safe spaces and giving predatory males a welcome invitation to enter these spaces. Women and girls will self-exclude from things like sport, using public swimming

pools, using female bathrooms etc and will not be able to freely participate in daily life as a result. This is in contravention of CEDAW; the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, an International Treaty to which Australia is a signatory.<sup>vii</sup>

How very progressive.

In fact, the “Yogyakarta Principles” which are referred to in the Explanatory Notes for the Bill<sup>viii</sup> – have exactly zero force in Australian or international law<sup>ix</sup>. They have also never been ratified by the UN.

On the same day that she introduced this Bill, Minister Fentiman talked about how important it is to get women into leadership positions and mentioned the fact that the QLD State Government is made up of “21 fantastic women representing their communities with Australia’s longest serving female Premier”. Would Minister Fentiman think it totally fine if those 21 fantastic women were in fact trans-identified males? Would that be a step closer to the gender equality she’s seeking?

Apparently.

Meantime the Minister for Women waxes lyrical about all the things the State government is doing for women. For instance, in 2021–22, the Budget delivered more than \$138 million to respond to domestic, family and sexual violence including counselling and crisis responses, perpetrator interventions, court support, shelters and mobile support, awareness and prevention, and sexual assault support.<sup>x</sup>

While the Vision for the government’s “QLD Women’s Strategy” is:

“Women and girls have equal rights and equal access to opportunities. Women and girls are safe, valued, and able to freely participate and succeed in the economic, social and cultural opportunities available. Women and girls are recognised and celebrated for their achievements and contributions to the community”.<sup>xi</sup>

To develop this Women’s strategy, public consultations from the community identified 2 major themes to be addressed as a priority:

1. men’s violence against women and girls, including domestic and family violence, sexual violence and sexual abuse, and
2. women’s economic security and financial independence and, in particular, the gender pay gap, and housing affordability and homelessness.<sup>xii</sup>

But this “Women’s Strategy”, in Shannon Fentiman’s own words - “recognises all people who identify as women”....<sup>xiii</sup>

So, what she’s saying is - anyone is a woman if they say that they are.

How preposterous. A woman is an adult, human female. We are not an identity, a costume or an idea in a man’s head. We are not a fetish. We are so much more than all those things. But, at the core of it - we are women because we are female. That’s the only criteria. We make up 50% of the population. And this new legislation will allow any MAN to change his birth certificate to falsely state that he (an adult, human, male) is in fact, female. Yet according to Minister Fentiman - the changes will not significantly impact us....

If anyone can be a woman by self-identifying as one, then specialist services for women and funding for women to address the inequalities faced by females (which the QLD government has identified as necessary and attempts to address with their funding commitments, some of which I’ve

mentioned) – are utterly pointless. Because any man can “self-identify” as a woman and access these services (which are meant to be female-only, single-sex) – such as a rape-crisis shelter, or a breastfeeding support group.

I regularly take my young daughter to swimming lessons at the local swimming pool. In the female change rooms, I witness other mothers caring for young children, semi-nude, breastfeeding, showering. I witness elderly women changing after a swim, some require walking aids – all these women are vulnerable and are in a state of semi-undress. Predatory males must not be invited into these spaces. If trans-identified males are given the green light to enter these spaces, then all men are invited in, because how do we know the difference?

And then women self-exclude as a result. Hurling women’s rights back decades...<sup>xiv</sup>

This is happening across the western world where self-ID is currently trending – and not only is this ideology being forced upon us; this lie that men can be women<sup>xv</sup>, but what is worse is predatory males abusing these laws to access vulnerable women and girls<sup>xvi</sup>. Shannon Fentiman needn’t look very far to find a plethora of well-documented instances of this occurring.

Furthermore, Minister Fentiman is making her move at a time when caution is being urged in relation to the medicalisation, mutilation and ultimately sterilisation of young people with experimental drugs and life-altering surgeries.<sup>xvii xviii</sup>

But timing doesn’t seem to matter to Minister Fentiman. Amazingly, just the week before she chose to introduce this Bill (which by the way, was the last week of parliament for the year – knowing full well that people are busy as we head into Xmas and may completely miss this Bill or not have time to make a submission to the committee) but just the week before that, the UN Expert on Violence Against Women, Reem Alsalem, wrote a letter in response to the Scottish government’s proposals to reform gender recognition laws. In that letter she said that Scotland’s version of “self-ID” “would potentially open the door for violent males who identify as men to abuse the process”.<sup>xix</sup>

How outrageous that Minister Fentiman would not only ignore her female constituents but would also completely disregard a UN expert on this matter.

Furthermore, anyone with any sort of common sense needs only consider the high number of females who have been personally impacted by some form of male violence, and it absolutely beggars’ belief that there’s any confusion about the need for female-only single-sex spaces. These spaces are necessary for these many women and girls to feel safe and to be able to heal, without being retraumatised by the presence of males (regardless of how they choose to identify).

How will Minister Fentiman guarantee the safety, privacy, dignity and human rights of girls and women? How will the Minister ensure women and girls will not be put in danger under her proposed legislation? What assurances can she possibly provide to women and girls that we will not be harmed – physically, emotionally, psychologically - by self-ID, when there’s so much proof that this is **exactly** what happens.

These are the facts. If nothing else, my submission - along with countless others which also present plenty of evidence of why this proposed legislation harms women and girls, is on the public record. Our opposition to this insane legislation is on public record. You can’t say you didn’t know.

## References

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- <sup>ii</sup> Hansard Record of Proceedings [2022 12 02 WEEKLY \(parliament.qld.gov.au\)](https://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/2022/12/02/weekly) p. 3934
- <sup>iii</sup> [Why a female athlete should be your next leader | EY - Global](#)
- <sup>iv</sup> Deborah Acaon-Lovely, No Self-ID Public Information Session, 12 Nov 2022 [\(567\) No self identification public information session 12 nov 2022 ... Deb - YouTube](#)
- <sup>v</sup> [Trans prison experiment leads to more rape and abuse in women's cellblocks: Investigation | Daily Mail Online](#)
- <sup>vi</sup> Survey, The Courier Mail 2 December 2022
- <sup>vii</sup> [Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women \(un.org\)](#)
- <sup>viii</sup> [Microsoft Word - JAG-#6468865-v3-Explanatory Notes - Births Deaths and Marriages Registration Bill 2022 \(parliament.qld.gov.au\)](#)
- <sup>ix</sup> [Yogyakarta Principles: International Threat to Women's Rights - OBJECT NOW](#)
- <sup>x</sup> [2021-22 Budget | Department of Justice and Attorney-General](#)
- <sup>xi</sup> [About the Queensland women's strategy | Department of Justice and Attorney-General](#)
- <sup>xii</sup> [About the Queensland women's strategy | Department of Justice and Attorney-General](#)
- <sup>xiii</sup> Correspondence from the Office of Minister Shannon Fentiman, Reference 6210481, 21 July 2022
- <sup>xiv</sup> [A matter of convenience...or lack thereof: Ladies lavatories in twentieth-century Brisbane | Australian Women's History Network Australian Women's History Network \(auswhn.org.au\)](#)
- <sup>xv</sup> ["Gender Identity": A Corporate Fiction - by Jennifer Bilek \(substack.com\)](#)
- <sup>xvi</sup> [Trans Serial Killer Who Targeted Women Was Granted Entry to Women's Shelter, Used Photos of Victim on Facebook - Reduxx](#)
- <sup>xvii</sup> [UK Children's Gender Clinic Shut Down Over Safety Concerns | Women Are Human](#)
- <sup>xviii</sup> [Sweden's New Pediatric Treatment Guidelines Ditch 'Gender-Affirming' Medication For Psychotherapy | The Daily Wire](#)
- <sup>xix</sup> [UN expert warns men could 'abuse' Scottish gender reforms - BBC News](#)