

## Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Bill 2022

**Submission No:** 146

**Submitted by:**



**Publication:** Making the submission public and withholding your name

**See attached:**

January 9, 2023

Dear Members of the Committee,

Re: In Support of the Births, Deaths, and Marriages Registration Bill

I write to you to register my support for the *Births, Deaths, and Marriages Registration Bill* introduced by the Honourable Shannon Fentiman MP, which would introduce significant reforms to the registration of births, deaths, and marriages in Queensland to accommodate understandings of new technologies, the prevalence of fertilisation procedures, and the existence of transgender and gender diverse (hereafter trans) people in society.

I can speak to this topic as a 15-year-old trans girl who knows firsthand the momentous impact that this legislation will have on my life, and the lives of trans people across this state.

I support the passage of this bill for these reasons:

- The existing requirement for surgical intervention for a person to change their gender unnecessarily medicalises the identity of a trans person and is extremely dehumanising. The journeys that trans people experience within their identities and bodies are complex, diverse, and unique. Because of this, imposing a rigid requirement to decide whether someone is 'trans enough' is extremely harmful. Gender confirmation surgery is an invasive, expensive, and many times inaccessible procedure that some trans people feel may not be a necessary step in their transition journey.
- Many transgender people still face employment and housing discrimination to this day. A trans person whose official documentation misgenders puts them at risk of being outed, which can lead to them being harassed, discriminated against, or physically harmed.
- Lowering the age of eligibility for changing the gender on a person's birth certificate from 18 to 16 will be monumental in the lives of many transgender people. Transgender people deserve to enter adulthood with their documentation correctly reflecting their gender identity, and not be forced to face intensive and laborious paperwork whilst they are applying for higher education, housing, employment, loans, or superannuation. Alleviating the extreme distress that comes from having to misgender yourself on official documentation will be a positive step towards making the lives of trans people easier.
- Furthermore, the lack of ability to change your gender on official documentation has detrimental effects on trans people's everyday lives. As a trans woman, I have gone through experiences where I was addressed by airport receptionists as 'Mr' as my plane ticket was still marked as 'M'. Software programmes that gather their information based on birth certificate details constantly misgender me, and non-binary people that I know are oftentimes misgendered on bank certificates, due to most banks not having non-binary gender options. Consequently, this constant misgendering can cause severe mental health problems. Being misgendered is akin to being haunted by the ghost of a version of yourself that caused you immense mental and physical anguish, which emphasises the importance of the passage of this act.

I urge the committee to consider this information and support the passage of the bill. This is an extremely personal issue for many trans people in all corners of this state, and whilst there is still drastic work that needs to be done to improve the quality of life for trans people, this bill is a huge step in the right direction.

Sincerely,