

Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Bill 2022

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Submitter Comments:

I am deeply concerned by the changes proposed to the Queensland Birth, Deaths and Marriages Registration Bill as introduced by Minister Shannon Fentiman. While I do absolutely value and have concern for the issues experienced by people who identify as transgender, I believe there is also a necessity for any laws to balance the safety of BOTH transgender individuals AND biological women, biological men, and children. Laws that would allow males to simply self-identify as female enable predatory males easy and legal access to the sex segregated spaces that women and children rely on for safety from those predatory males. These include domestic violence shelters, rape crisis centers, and jails. This is not to conflate trans-women with predatory males, but simply states that those men who ARE predatory WILL abuse these laws to access victims. This will endanger the safety of women, children AND trans-women. The United Kingdom and USA have already seen violent male sex offenders self-identifying as women while incarcerated and so being transferred to women's facilities. Some of these offenders have then committed rape on female prisoners and in at least one case impregnated a female prisoner. This is utterly unacceptable and yet is an obvious downstream effect if this type of law. These precedents must be considered when voting on this new bill. It would seem Minister Shannon Fentiman is unaware of these precedents in jurisdictions that have already introduced these kinds of law, and so it would be inappropriate to advance a bill without a more thorough examination. There is also the important issue of recording statistical information in areas such as medicine, crime, incarceration, domestic violence, etc. The birth certificate records biological sex at birth, which remains constant biologically throughout life, regardless of how one identifies. This information is crucial for understanding societal issues, determining causation and solving these issues. As an example, In enabling the changing of the sex designation with simple self-declaration we obscure sex based distinctions in medical diagnoses and recording of incidence of disease. This leads to harm for all individuals in society, including transgender individuals. Appropriate accommodations should and must be made for transgender individuals in our society, however this must not be done with such obvious potential negative consequences for women, children and indeed transgender individuals themselves. There must be greater examination of these serious issues with the bill before greater harm is caused than would be solved by the bill. Consultation with all stakeholders potentially effected by these changes, not exclusively transgender activists, is essential.