


Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Bill 2022

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Submitted by: 
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Submitter Comments:

I became aware today of the changes proposed to the Queensland Birth, Deaths and Marriages Registration Bill, as presented by Minister Shannon Fentiman, and these changes have caused me to feel deeply concerned for the safety of all women and children. While I understand and value the providence of safety and well-being for people who identify as transgender, I believe there is a necessity for any laws to encompass 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. Such spaces include, but are not limited to, domestic violence shelters, rape crisis centres and jails. I write this not to conflate trans-women with predatory males, rather to point out that those men who are predatory could abuse these laws to access victims. These laws if passed will greatly endanger the safety of women, children and trans-women. The United Kingdom and USA have already witnessed numerous violent male sex offenders self-identifying as women while incarcerated and subsequently transferred to women's facilities. A number of these offenders have then committed rape on female prisoners (in at least one case a female prisoner became pregnant with her perpetrator). This is utterly unacceptable and yet is an obvious downstream effect if this type of law gets passed through parliament. These precedents must be considered carefully and thoroughly when it comes to voting on this bill. It would appear that Minister Shannon Fentiman is unaware of the above precedents in jurisdictions that have already introduced these kinds of law, and as such it would be inappropriate to advance a bill without a more thorough examination. Another important issue to consider is the recording of statistical information in areas such as medicine, crime, incarceration, domestic violence and so forth. The birth certificate records biological sex at birth, which remains constant biologically throughout life, regardless of how one identifies in terms of gender. This information is vital for understanding societal issues, determining causation and solving these issues. To illustrate through 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 and disease. This in turn 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 implemented with such obvious 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 affected by these changes, not exclusively transgender activists, is essential.