

Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Bill 2022

Submission No: 283
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Submitter Comments:

Dear Committee, Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission. I am a Master of Social Work student. I am migrant, brown, gay and I will be 31 in half a year. I first became involved with LGBTIQ+ Rights community during the marriage equality campaign. I came out as gay publicly shortly before then, and was able to start living authentically as a gay man in a way that was liberating and wholesome, and I was able to live and explore my identity culturally and socially, and stop feeling like I needed to have a secret and live in the closet with so many family members. I am still learning to be comfortable with having a queer voice, ways of dressing, and being confident socially - and I was held back in forming these parts of my identity that mean a lot to me because of years of fear of discrimination and bigotry. I feel robbed of a queer adolescence and youth, as I had to learn to be comfortable with myself in my 20's when I should have been affirmed and supported as any young person should be in being themselves. I still see a lot of those fears represented today, in ways that are more obscure - such as the religious discrimination bill or trans exclusionary radical fascists. So much queer history was lost, buried or burned during the holocaust, and due to lingering effects of colonialism that countries like India, my birth country, are still unable to address. Queer people in India have to resort to courts to get equal rights and stop being criminalised - as legislators are refusing them rights. This bill is an opportunity for Queensland to make a leap towards equality and inclusion for Trans, Gender Diverse, and Non-Binary (TGDNB) People, and work towards harmonising civil equality laws across Australian jurisdictions. I am in favour of amending the legislation to allow Trans, Gender Diverse, and Non-Binary (TGDNB) People to be able to have their authentic gender markers recorded on formal documents such as birth certificates. Being able to do so will allow TGDNB people to express their identity with safety and more comfort, as their formal identifying documents will authentically reflect who they are - supporting them to live social and professional lives with less fears of discrimination and feeling like a part of their identity is withheld from them. Administration will be less of a barrier to them, and instances of conscious and unconscious bias will be mitigated. Trans people are an important part of the queer umbrella, and LGBTIQ+ rights would not have progressed as far as they have without them. Trans people have provided incredible contributions towards understanding and exploring gender and critical thinking. And yet their rights and health outcomes are far behind others in the queer community, and this bill is an opportunity to address this gap. TGDNB Civil rights are under attack, and just today I read reports that in the UK, conservatives are attempting to deny gender recognition of Australian TGDNB people who visit the UK. I'd like to acknowledge my friends, Gabe and Effy, whom I have learned so much from, whether it was patience, empathy, emotional maturity, responsibility, living as a queer adult, or rocking it professionally. I am in the process of Australian citizenship, and one of the first things I intend to do is change my title from "Mr" to "Mx" when I apply for an Australian passport. I want to do this simply because I do not feel attached to the idea of being a cisgender male, I question it, and I recognise that I have a lot of privilege and safety from being recognised as a man, despite my various identities of being gay, migrant, brown, and mixed East Indian, Portuguese, Spanish, and English descent. Trans people should simply be recognised and respected for who they are, and birth certificate reform is an important step in that direction. Lastly I would like to say that I believe that amending a gender marker should be free, and cost should not be a barrier to living authentically. Thank you again for this opportunity.