

## **Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Bill 2022**

**Submission No:** 331  
**Submitted by:** Alexis Pink  
**Publication:** Making the submission and your name public

**Submitter Comments:**

To the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee,

**RE: Submission - Births, Deaths & Marriages Registration bill 2022**

I am writing to express my support for the Births, Deaths & Marriages Registration bill 2022. While it is not customary for a journalist to write directly to a committee on any legislation, in this specific set of circumstances where it is clear that such legislation would benefit me directly, I think the profession may forgive me a certain amount of liberty.

Having read through the legislation and the interpretations the government has provided in its explanatory notes; it is hard to see how the legislation does not serve the LGBTIQ community better. I have spoken to many people who work in advocacy in this area who came to similar conclusions with some reservations, which I am sure they are more than happy to expand on.

For my personal submission, I would like to narrow down on my experiences of transition in different workspaces and environments to highlight some of the reasons people in the transgender community specifically are looking for the opportunity to be considered on the value of their work and character as a person, rather than having to counter the specific stereotypes of being transgender to highlight what it will mean for transgender people who are changing workspaces not to be immediately outed by their documentation.

I transitioned in my mid 30's, and was in the middle phase of my career, with some smaller volunteering roles ongoing at the time. The organisations I worked and volunteered for at the time were primarily tolerant of these changes, but it was certainly not the smoothest process:

- A person in my direct supervision line asked me how loud it was when I urinated when I go to the bathroom; they were trying to deal with a concern that a person had that I might make other people uncomfortable by "peeing loudly". To be totally fair to that manager, he had no intention of keeping me out of the women's bathroom, but it was still an awkward conversation for both of us.
- I was told by a senior member of the organisation that a person in a team I was working in was questioning if I could be held to account under the internal code of conduct after I transitioned.
- I was in the process of coming out in one organisation, and the partner of a person connected with the management of that organisation said to me that I was being "Very brave by coming forward", I later found out he was talking about another thing, but the idea that the management had leaked the information to people was very chilling.
- In one very uncomfortable moment, I was greeting some colleagues, and one of them returned my greeting as "Mister Alexis", managing to get my names but not my pronouns correct. They did apologise thereafter, but it was embarrassing for both of us.

While some of these incidents were worse than others, it should be said that the majority of people made considerable effort to include me. That said, moments like this can wear on a person's capacity, make them feel more isolated and potentially lead to needless workplace disputes. Being open about transgender experiences in workplaces can be quite intimidating, but at the very least, it should be up to the transgender person themselves to navigate that question.

My stories were mostly unavoidable, a result of many years working with the same people, but no one should be forced into making that reveal. Allowing people to change the gender marker on their birth certificate will lower the chance of a person being exposed in their work environment and minimise reactions like the ones I mentioned.

It is why support for bills like this is so important; your gender identity should have nothing to do with your capacity to interact in the world around you. This bill will support that aim by removing a barrier that does not need to exist.

I would like to thank the committee staff and members for the opportunity to make a submission on this topic and to the Queensland Attorney General Shannon Fentamin for taking the challenge that this issue takes with the utmost seriousness and respect for the community as a whole.

Regards,

Alexis Pink

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