

Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Bill 2022

Submission No: 336
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Submitter Comments:

I wish to support the bill and the positive reforms this will bring for the lives of trans and gender diverse people. In early 2021, I wrote a petition to Queensland Parliament in support of reforming the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act, which garnered over 10,000 signatures and is among the most popular Qld parliamentary e-petitions ever. We primarily called for the removal of the surgery requirement to change the sex on one's birth certificate, an overdue change to bring Qld in line with most other states and territories. This requirement is discriminatory against trans and gender diverse people who cannot or do not need to have any kind of gender affirming surgery. I was also happy to see the bill include, as called for in the petition, a change in how parents are registered, allowing for two mothers or two fathers, or any other combination of titles as suits the parents' preferred terminology. This is another long overdue change that should have been reformed in the previous amendment to the Act. There will be opposition to this bill from conservatives and regressive so-called feminists alike. These ideologies consider trans and gender diverse people to be lesser members of society. Trans women are women, and trans men are men. We have every right to be treated as our gender, and any claims that these reforms will encroach upon the rights or safety of cisgender women are not based on reality. Accepting trans and gender diverse people for who they are improves their health and safety. Trans people have a heightened risk of suicide and of being a victim of violence. Trans people who are able to be supported by community and accepted by society have their mental health improved markedly, reducing rates of suicide and self-harm. Freely allowing people to have their legal documents reflect their identities is a significant part of what's needed. My petition also recommended that changes to documents be made free, and I was glad to see provisions for fees to be waived increase. However, when trans and gender diverse people suffer greater rates of poverty and homelessness, these fees gatekeep their ability to have their legal documents reflect their identity. Speaking from experience, while the fees may seem small to change a document with the Registry, when you're struggling financially it's hard to prioritise the spare money you need to update your documents. I strongly support this bill and the improvements it will make to the lives of trans and gender diverse people, a marginal step towards making our society more equal. The community support is evidenced by the 10,838 signatures on my petition to parliament in 2021, and the overwhelmingly positive response for the reforms proposed in it. The proposed amendments of this bill support and affirm the human rights of trans people to be recognised by society according to their identity, and should be accepted.