




Speech By  
**Nikki Boyd**

**MEMBER FOR PINE RIVERS**

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## **ANTI-DISCRIMINATION (RIGHT TO USE GENDER-SPECIFIC LANGUAGE) AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Ms BOYD** (Pine Rivers—ALP) (6.55 pm): I rise tonight to oppose the private member's bill. In doing so, it is remarkable that I follow on from the contribution from the sole One Nation member in this place who claims that One Nation treats all people with respect.

**Mr Harper:** Except for those non-English-speaking ones.

**Ms BOYD:** I take the interjection from the member for Thuringowa. Certainly, after decades on the public record, we have not seen that from One Nation.

It is rare that a bill introduced in this parliament makes me feel physically sick, but I feel sick about this private member's bill from the leader of the Katter party. I find it offensive in absolutely every way. It is divisive and it is repugnant. In modern, vibrant, tolerant communities like ours, it has no place. From the outset I put on the record, in particular to all of those gender-diverse or gender-questioning folks in our community, that the socially constructed and hierarchical categories assigned to individuals on the basis of their apparent sex at birth do not define them. Many people in our communities do not fit into these narrowly defined and rigid gender norms. We know that some people may not feel either masculinity or femininity or may reject gender all together. I want to live in a world that is more diverse, more welcoming and more tolerant and does not confine people through gender norms. People are not contained by social constructs around how they should dress or what role they should play in society. You do not have to conform to rigid gender roles—masculine, feminine or neither. Just be true to you.

There is a fundamental insecurity that lies at the heart of the vehement position of gender-binary language, and that is power—the power relationships between men and women and the loss of perceived power that leaves people feeling threatened and intimidated. We know that when people do not adhere to the norms associated with their gender it can and does result in ridicule, intimidation and even, tragically, violence.

This private member's bill is fundamentally flawed. It seeks to protect gender-specific language as if it were an attribute for the purposes of the Anti-Discrimination Act. It is not. There is no right to use gender-specific language under the various international human rights instruments. This Katter bill seeks to include an entity or business for protections from discrimination. It cannot; it is for individuals. This Katter bill would enshrine the right of a person to deliberately and persistently misgender a person.

**Mr Power:** Maliciously.

**Ms BOYD:** I take that interjection from the member for Logan—deliberately and persistently. Misgendering is not okay. It certainly should not have protections under the Anti-Discrimination Act. This bill is harmful, this bill is dangerous and this bill is not tolerant. This bill has no place in a tolerant and accepting community like ours.

The leader of the Katter party wants this brought to a head. He wants it discussed and debated, but for what purpose but to be divisive? What impact does having a gender on your licence make? What impact does having a gender on your birth certificate make? What impact does having a unisex toilet rather than gendered toilets make? What impact does girls wearing shorts and pants as part of their school uniform make so they can fully participate at school?

These are the examples that the Katter party has listed as problematic, as offensive and as a need to protect discriminatory behaviour. This bill only speaks to the threat of privilege and power and is not only fundamentally flawed; it is just plain wrong. Not everyone conforms with mainstream heterosexual culture. That is okay. Those people should be embraced and celebrated and encouraged and loved. The member for Traeger appeals for tolerance, but the only tolerance he is appealing for is the tolerance for the ability to be intolerant. I will not be supporting this bill.