

Thursday, 7 December 2017

Australia takes a leap forward on human rights with the passing of marriage equality bill

The Law Council of Australia has congratulated the Australian Parliament for passing a historic bill legalising marriage equality and enshrining a fundamental human right.

“This is a tremendous day not just for LGBTQI Australians, but for Australian human rights and Australian justice,” said Law Council President, Fiona McLeod SC.

“Freedom from discrimination is a fundamental human right. Discrimination on arbitrary grounds, including sexual orientation, is contrary to Australia’s international human rights obligations.

“Today Parliament has delivered on the emphatic decision of the Australian people and helped embed this crucial right for LGBTQI Australians.”

Ms McLeod thanked the many parliamentarians who had met with the Law Council over the course of the national debate.

“We are extremely grateful for the constructive meetings and engagement we have had with a broad range of parliamentarians, from government ministers, shadow ministers, backbenchers and the crossbench,” Ms McLeod said.

“It was the Law Council’s view that the marriage equality bill presented to Parliament already struck the right balance between protecting the right to religious freedom and the right to be free from discrimination.

“We are grateful that Parliament has formed the same view and we are pleased today that Australia has removed discrimination from the Marriage Act.

“We have taken a great leap forward for Australian human rights and for that we should all be proud,” Ms McLeod said.

The Law Council announced its original support for marriage equality shortly after the Marriage Act was amended in 2004 and supported a ‘yes’ vote during recent the postal survey.

Patrick Pantano

P 02 6246 3715 (includes mobile)
E Patrick.Pantano@lawcouncil.asn.au

Sonia Byrnes

P 0437 078 850
E Sonia.Byrnes@lawcouncil.asn.au