

To The assistant Secretary,
International Human Rights and Anti-Discrimination Branch,
Attorney-General's Department,
Robert Garran Offices,
3-5 Circuit,
Barton ACT 2600

It is reported that the Government is considering Commonwealth Anti-Discrimination laws with the intent of seeking to consolidate Commonwealth anti-discrimination laws into a single Act.

Over the years, as anti-discrimination laws have been enacted there has been a definite reduction in individual freedom of speech, freedom of expressing convictions about issues that relate to morals, religious belief, analysis of social groups or any other thing that may be covered by such laws. There was a time that Australians could express their beliefs without fear of some anti-discrimination law which meant that issues could be openly & honestly discussed.

Since these laws have been introduced there has been reverse discrimination in which those who are covered in the laws are able to be positively favoured at law to the detriment of the majority of the Australian people. The laws that are in place in the various States relating to homosexuality are used to silence any critics of that way of life. Laws that cover discrimination against other religious minorities are used by those people to silence their critics or to force people to act against their own conscience or convictions. This has been seen in a number of cases in recent years.

The homosexual lobby has used these laws to intimidate those who oppose their chosen lifestyle. If these proposed Federal Laws allow anti-discrimination laws based on sexuality then we will see more reverse discrimination against the majority who do not agree with that chosen lifestyle. The laws will in fact be aiding and abetting discrimination against the majority of Australian people. This is not right. We do not need more laws regarding anti-discrimination. We need to reduce this burden. Such laws encourage people to find fault in others & to seek retribution at law using these anti-discrimination laws.

It is apparent that anti-discrimination laws go hand in hand with Equal Opportunity Commissions & Tribunals. These bodies do not allow for the rule of law but are more of a law unto themselves. They could be described as a "Kangaroo Court" where the person standing accused before them is considered guilty & has to prove their innocence rather than considered innocent until proven guilty. Those who use these laws are able to make accusations without the responsibility of facing consequences if those accusations are proven to be false. The accused has no rights before these courts.

The fear is that if the Government tampers with these laws they will add to them & not actually bring them into line with the actual law & in fairness to all Australians. It will be weighted towards those who look for laws to use in so called cases of discrimination.

We certainly do not need Commonwealth laws that add laws based on sexuality. The homosexual lobby wants to be seen at law as a special interest group that is favoured at law above the majority of Australians. They are able to speak ill of any who speak against their behaviour using very hostile language & showing the utmost hatred towards those who are in their sights without any restraint at law but any who simply speak out against their lifestyle in a decent but factual manner will be targeted by these people. The anti-discrimination laws will protect such behaviour.

This same problem is seen when we examine other areas such as religion or race. Over sensitive people will read into words or actions anything that will give them a case even if there was nothing said or done in reality that was discriminatory, but anti-discrimination laws will give them the right to accuse a person to a Commission or Tribunal with out any comeback if they are shown to be wrong. People suffer when this happens. If a person has a grievance with another they can use such laws to take revenge. It is very difficult to counter an accusation that you have been guilty of discrimination.

Current anti-discrimination laws are unfair & have no place in Australia. It is our fear that any attempt by the Commonwealth to work on these laws will only see an increase in social activism which will mean harsher laws, more encompassing laws & less freedoms for the Australian people. Those who are responsible for drafting anti-discrimination laws seem to show more favour to those whom they perceive to be discriminated against than the majority who will be discriminated against as a result of their laws.

We do not want anti-discrimination laws based on sexuality or gender identity. Apart from being unnecessary, they are used to take away the freedom of choice of the majority & they are used to remove freedom of religion. It would seem that in trying to remove discrimination from our society, lawmakers have lost sight of the fact that their laws have caused many people, particularly the Christian community, to suffer from discrimination & to lose the right to choose according to the

dictates of their beliefs & convictions before God. It seems popular to simply dismiss the concerns of Christians in this land as if they are at the bottom of the scale of concern when considering the consequences of discrimination laws. Churches, Christian schools, charity organisations, community services which are a part of the activities of Christians to the community should not be forced to seek exemption from so called anti-discrimination laws but should have the right to follow the dictates of their convictions & beliefs. It is wrong for a law to force a christian school for example to hire an immoral person or a homosexual because that is against the teachings of the Bible. There are other opportunities for such people without forcing their immorality onto those who do not agree with it. This is simply using the law to bully people into submission against their will. It is lawful discrimination against the Christian.

Christians do not want to use anti-discrimination laws against others. We understand that people will speak ill against a Christian or act in a discriminatory manner but we do not want to use such laws & we do not want such laws that will be used against us.

We also have the case of doctors who refuse to do abortions but are accused of discrimination. Or of counsellors who will not recommend same sex relationships & end up being accused of discrimination. Or of the Doctor who warns against the medical dangers of the homosexual lifestyle but who ends up facing the Anti-Discrimination tribunal as happened recently to a doctor in a case in Queensland. Or the case against Wesley Mission refusing to act in assisting a same sex couple adopt a child or the case against the CYC camp at Phillip Island. All of these & many other examples show the discrimination caused by anti-discrimination laws.

We do not need more or stronger laws which highlight race or nationality & we certainly do not need to add sexuality or gender identity to the Federal laws. Australia is a tolerant society & one which largely embraces people from all backgrounds. Discrimination laws only serve to cause further division in society. A lot of people would just get on in life & would mix with those around them if there was not the constant reminder that certain things said or done might be considered discriminatory. You just encourage the thought that you have been discriminated against. If nothing was made of an issue it would simply die a natural death. Those who are pushing anti-discrimination laws simply aggravate the situation. Those who want discrimination laws want a legal weapon with which to attack those who oppose them. Such people do not want genuine debate but want to silence all opposition. They want freedom for themselves but they do not allow it for those who have a different view or belief to them.

None of us would support unfair discrimination which leads to physical harm etc. However much of what is called discrimination is simply the individual making a choice based on his or her beliefs. Anti-Discrimination laws should not take that freedom away. Hurt feelings are not a reason to introduce anti-discrimination laws. If we took hurt feelings into account whose feelings have priority & whose feelings are more important? At the moment we suffer too much from such laws & they need to be reduced.

This country was founded upon the principle of freedom of conscience, freedom of speech, freedom of association, freedom of religion. We need to get back to this foundation. Remember, that once the principles of the Bible were undermined respect for other people was also undermined. It would be far better to put resource into re-establishing Biblical principles in the schools & institutions of learning so that there would be respect for each individual & acceptance of people of all backgrounds. We can still articulate our beliefs but it is not a hostile approach & it is not with the intent of bringing harm to a person. In such an environment we would not need so many anti-discrimination laws.

Please do not add to the burden of anti-discrimination laws in this country. We do not need them or want them.

Regards,
Malcolm Eglinton
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