

# Coalition of Activist Lesbians Inc Australia



## Contacts:

Virginia Mansel Lees, Convenor, 0438 282 146

Viviane Morrigan, Secretary & Public Officer, 0416 273 374

Email: admin@coal.org.au (still researching this through Namecheap)

Website: coal.org.au

September 2022

## **WARNING! Gender ideology threatens lesbian and gay rights yet again**

The Coalition of Activist Lesbians (CoAL) urges all Members of the Australian Parliament to reject proposed amendments to the Government's Australian Human Rights Commission Legislation Amendment (Selection and Appointment) Bill 2022, which call for the creation of an LGBTIQ+ Commissioner within the Australian Human Rights Commission.

An LGBTIQ+ Commissioner will not effectively protect the human rights of lesbians. Instead, this proposed legislation will only add further confusion to efforts to reduce harm to lesbians and other groups merged under the LGBTIQ+ umbrella. We do not all share the same attributes that need protection. Transgender identity is not a sexuality, and gender is not biological sex. intersex people understand they share similar issues as LGBTQI+ and some identify with the LGBTQI+ term and ideology but others do not.<sup>1</sup>

CoAL warns that the proposed amendments are driven by gender ideology, under the smokescreen of human rights rhetoric that misuses language and concepts of human rights, anti-discrimination, social justice, and equality to appeal to people's goodwill and sympathy. Key players in driving these changes are Australian LGBTIQ+ organisations, such as ACON (Aids Council of NSW), Just.Equal Australia, and AWEI (Australian Workplace Equality Index) as well as the multinational law firm Dentons that has an Australian branch. They all have ties to similar overseas organisations, such as Stonewall and ILGYO (International Lesbian Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer & Intersex Youth and Student Organisation) that is funded by a large European-based transgender rights organisation and that, in turn, is funded by the US-based LGBT NGO in the US, the Arcus Foundation.<sup>2</sup> The legal concept of gender identity was constructed in the Jogjakarta principles that were framed as an application of human rights law without any democratic representation, and used to construct the trans-activists' manual developed by Dentons with the Thompson-Reuters Foundation (a media, corporate tax, and law conglomerate).<sup>3</sup>

Over the past few years, gender ideology has driven a confusion of conflicting legislative changes in Australia, nationally (eg, Sex Discrimination legislation) and in many states and the ACT and NT, such as amendments to legislation covering Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration; banning of so-called SOGI (sexual orientation and gender identity) conversion practices, that have granted equivalence of sex, or replaced sex, with gender. Consequently, gender 'self-identification' has replaced legal sex status in many areas that negatively impact on lesbians. Lesbians are suffering harm from the following major impacts of gender ideology:

- **Lesbian community is being erased.**

By definition, a lesbian is an adult female human being<sup>4</sup>—a biological woman who is sexually attracted to other biological women (ie, our biology defines our sexuality). Gender ideology claims inaccurately that sexed identity can be replaced by gender

identity. Under this ideology, a man can 'self-declare' he is a woman and, furthermore, can claim to be a lesbian, whose 'rights' are abused when he insists that a lesbian who is a biological woman refuses to have sex with him. Legal prosecution taken out against the lesbian by the harmful perpetrator is state-sanctioned sexual harassment and assault of a lesbian.

- **Lesbians are losing our rights to freedom of assembly and association.**

A transgender identified man complained of discrimination because a private social gathering of lesbians planned for 2007 in South Australia had restricted entry to lesbians raised as girls. The result was the organisers had to raise \$10,000 to cover legal costs in defending their right of association to the SA Anti-Discrimination Commissioner, despite winning the case and the complainant later revealing he had no intention to actually attend (*O'Keefe v Sappho's Party Inc [2009] SAEOT 50*). Such abuse of the legal system means lesbians who do not want to have sex with biological men have been forced to 'go underground' in order to hold lesbian only gatherings. The recent decision by the Tasmanian Anti-Discrimination Commissioner to refuse an exemption to LGB Tasmania to hold a lesbian-only function was made by prioritising transgender rights over those of lesbians' rights to a space for lesbians to socialise together. A key result of gender ideology's effects on legislative changes and decisions in Australia and elsewhere has been a retreat back 'into the closet' for lesbians—into social isolation redolent of days before lesbian and gay liberation. Lesbian social and cultural venues have largely closed down and younger lesbians and those who 'come out' later in life, now rely on word of mouth information, and cannot so easily find each other.

- **Abuse and violence against lesbians is increasing.**

Transgender ideology is being used to promote so-called 'gender affirming care' that breaks the bonds between children and young people and their families and friends, and authorises educational and medical institutions to abuse the minds and bodies of young lesbians and gender-nonconforming young women, with false beliefs that it is possible to be born in the wrong body with the solution of a transgender identity, surgery and life-long medication that are irreversible.<sup>5</sup>

Lesbian and gay mardi gras parades in Australia and elsewhere have been taken over by transgender ideologues, diluting the celebration of lesbian and gay sexuality. Lesbians have been attacked when affirming their sexuality while participating in such events and marches. Gender critical lesbians are explicitly banned from LGBTQIA+ marches and events by the organisers.

The epithet TERF (Trans Exclusionary Radical Feminist) continues to be hurled at lesbians (and others) who express opinions that contradict transgender ideology. This includes against lesbians who reject the sexual advances of men who identify as transgender women and lesbians. The practice is widespread and rapidly escalates to threats of violence against the lesbian (see the plentiful evidence, such as verbal and text-based abuse that state 'TERFS can choke on my girl dick, 'Punch a TERF in the throat,' 'TERFS deserve to die' or 'Kill a TERF today.'" These and many other examples have been documented<sup>6</sup>

- **The human rights of lesbians are being severely undermined.**

Legislative, policy and institutional changes, which are poorly thought-out efforts to be inclusive of transgender rights, are having severe impacts on the hard fought for human

rights of lesbians and other women and girls. These changes undermine affirmative action strategies for women and lesbians, fail to acknowledge the harmful reality of male violence in lesbians' lives, create widespread physical and mental harm to lesbians who are recruited into the belief system of transgender ideology and subsequently subjected to irreversible medical interventions, and denies enjoyment and success for lesbians and other sportswomen in their chosen field of sport because of unfair acceptance of men who identify as transgender women.

We call on politicians to very carefully consider these proposed legislative changes and the likely detrimental impacts on the human rights of lesbians, as well as other women and girls of such laws based on transgender ideology.

Proponents of the proposed amendments to the Government's Australian Human Rights Commission Legislation Amendment (Selection and Appointment) Bill 2022, must demonstrate clear evidence that any legislative changes to protect human rights on the basis of sexuality and transgender identity will not harm lesbian rights. We believe they will not be able to do so.

---

### References

- <sup>1</sup> interACT. FAQ: Intersex, Gender, and LGBTQIA+. <https://interactadvocates.org/faq/intersex-lgbtqia/#acronym>.
- <sup>2</sup> Bilek, J (2020) Constructing The Legal Lie Of The Transgender Child - Part II, *The 11<sup>th</sup> hour*, <https://www.the11thhourblog.com/post/constructing-the-legal-lie-of-the-transgender-child-part-ii>.
- <sup>3</sup> Thomson-Reuters Foundation. (Nov 2019). Only adults? Good Practices in Legal Gender Recognition for Youth. [https://www.iglyo.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/IGLYO\\_v3-1.pdf](https://www.iglyo.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/IGLYO_v3-1.pdf).
- <sup>4</sup> *Cambridge Dictionary*. (2022). <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/woman>.
- <sup>5</sup> We demand a Parliamentary Inquiry into Gender-Affirming 'Care' (2022), *Active watchful waiting Australasia*, <https://www.lostintransition.org/child-abuse>.
- <sup>6</sup> TERF is a slur. Documenting the abuse, harassment, and misogyny of transgender identity politics', <https://terfisaslur.com/>.