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From: Mary-Faeth Chenery <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, 9 August 2019 9:03 PM
To: SARC
Subject: Concern about the Births, Deaths, and Marriages Registration Amendment Bill

I am writing to express my concern about the proposed Births, Deaths, and Marriages Registration Amendment Bill.

In brief,

- I believe the bill has not received adequate consultation with the full range of people interested in and affected by the bill, specifically lesbian and other women who have concern about its implications.
- I believe the bill is inadequately researched and does not deal with many of the quite valid concerns, for example, (a) concerns for public safety (women and biological men sharing the same spaces where privacy is needed and safety is at risk) and (b) the need for medical reasons, particularly research, to know the sex of the individual as born.
- I believe that it is possible to honour the choices of transgender people without removing sex-based rights defined as biological sex. Many women, and I include myself, wish to be able to gather in biological women-only spaces and to make their own choices about who is a woman in this social situation. We agree that transwomen should be able to have their own spaces and to associate with those they wish to spend time with. These spaces do not have to be the same while assuring equal rights and protection from discrimination.
- Gender is a socially created construct. Sex is a biological characteristic determined by physical factors. I believe they are distinct and should remain so. A 'gender certificate' could be created where assurance of gender is desired. The birth certificate should remain as created on the basis of biological sex at birth.
- The LGBTIQ community is not a unified group, but government is treating it as such as a matter of convenience. With the exception of intersex, which is a biological phenomenon later influenced strongly by the social situation of one's upbringing, I believe that gender as it affects LGBTI should be recognised as a social phenomenon and as one with considerable diversity within it. There are certain situations where biological males should not be permitted, and especially not required to be permitted, in spaces where biological females, especially including more vulnerable female children, are expecting privacy and safety.

I ask that you reconsider the proposed bill and postpone action on it until further, more inclusive consultation and appropriate consideration of research and public safety can be conducted.

Thank you for considering these points.

Yours sincerely,

Mary-Faeth Chenery

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