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From: Mary-Ann [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 18 July 2019 11:38 PM
To: SARC
Subject: Births Deaths Marriages Amendment Bill

Good evening,

I would like to raise my concern regarding the proposed changes to the Births Deaths Marriages amendment bill soon to be voted on in Parliament in Victoria.

I have numerous serious concerns with the proposal to allow the record of “sex” to be self declared on birth certificates as anything as long as it’s inoffensive.

As the central and official record of authority on the basic facts of an individual, a birth certificate is not simply a personal document - it also serves as a repository of important social and community information.

One example is **medical research**. This will lose integrity. The ability to research male and female biology separately and/or together and compare the two will be eliminated. Not overnight, but over time. If only a fraction of people chose to change their birth certificate in the short term that may not seem to be an issue of concern, however if trends continue at their current rates in the long term large numbers of people who register changes will increase dramatically.

Regardless, even a small percentage of people making these changes could mean significant impacts on statistical disruption.

Another example is **women’s sport** which relies on keeping an even and fair playing field for biological women by excluding men who have experienced the obvious advantage of the natural effects of testosterone during puberty leading them to have an undeniable greater physical capacity than women.

Only one or two men choosing to change their birth certificate and join a women’s sport will have disastrous effects for women who will immediately be relegated to the place of second best. In the USA and New Zealand these changes have already begun to show disastrous outcomes for women. In the USA women have even begun to fight back through the legal system.

I won’t go into details of other issues other than to say that there will be significant impacts on **women’s dormitories** and hostels, women’s **changing rooms** and **bathrooms**, **girls schools**, **clubs** (such as Girl Guides), women’s **right to request female doctors** and other health providers, **womens domestic violence shelters** and **women’s prisons**. These are all examples of places in society where women and girls are generally more vulnerable and for which provisions have therefore been made to mitigate risks to them.

While individual women who’ve experienced the safety of these provisions consistently their entire lives may not initially and instinctively recognise these provisions as the reason they generally feel safe one need only look to evidence around the world of male harassment of women from street base harassment to public transport to “upskirting” which has recently been a cause for concern in Korea to acknowledge that there is still a significant proportion of men who take pleasure in harassing women in predatory ways. Creating more opportunities for men to access women and girls in vulnerable situations will result in a serious erosion of women’s safety in our community.

On top of the above is another concerning issue impacting you people especially girls who are unhappy with social gender expectations and vulnerable to be pressured into transition - physical, hormonal and social. This has been happening predominantly via social media at an accelerating rate over the past 5-10years. It consists of many practices which consist of basic grooming tactics and accounts are beginning to emerge

from those who have now desisted or de-transitioned in which they describe their ordeal as one of being lured into a cult.

I urge you to find this amendment in violation of basic human rights for women and girls. And recommend that it not be passed.

Please get in touch with me if you would like any further information regarding the above as I would be more than happy to elaborate, forward references or contact details of others who are expert on the impacts of these changes into one field or another.

Kind regards,

Mary-Ann Parker

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