

Legislation Committee

From: Manuao Makeup [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, 24 April 2019 10:42 AM
To: Legislation Committee
Subject: Human Reproductive Technology and Surrogacy Legislation Amendment Bill 2018

Dear Committee,

I write to you urging you to support The Human Reproductive Technology and Surrogacy Legislation Amendment Bill 2018.

Currently the law states that altruistic surrogacy is only permissible for women who are unable to conceive. Lesbian couples have the option of accessing reproductive technology, however gay couples and single men are unjustly offered no options of starting a family of their own.

The Surrogacy Bill 2007 which was passed by the Legislative Assembly in September 2007 and the Legislative Council in December 2008, contained amendments that ban same-sex male couples and single men from altruistic surrogacy arrangements. These archaic amendments are contradictory to the Federal anti-discrimination laws outlined in the Sex Discrimination Act 1984, which make it unlawful to discriminate on the basis on one's sexual orientation and gender.

While some may argue that a child needs a traditional family of a mother and father, research evidence indicates that children raised in same-sex parented families do as well emotionally, socially and educationally as other children raised in heterosexual parented families(1).

The options of starting a family in our own state are abated by the current law, and many same sex couples are forced to look overseas at extraordinary expense and legal uncertainty. The journey of bringing a child into the world, becoming a parent for the first time, is one full of equal parts excitement and unknowing. For intended parents, having a known surrogate in your home state and assisting with the pregnancy, would provide comfort and support to all those involved.

With precedence of male couples having access to altruistic surrogacy and reproductive technology in all other states in Australia, it is time we update our own laws.

Currently laws recognise that gay male couples and single men are fit to be parents to the most vulnerable children in our community (those that are given up for adoption or fostered out). For this reason I ask you to allow us the same rights to create our own families through the process of altruistic surrogacy.

Thanks for your time and consideration on this matter.

Warm regards
Manuao TeAotonga

(1) Australian Institute of Family Studies-Same-Sex Couple Families in Australia
<https://aifs.gov.au/PUBLICATIONS/SAME-SEX-COUPLE-FAIVILIES-AUSTRALIA>