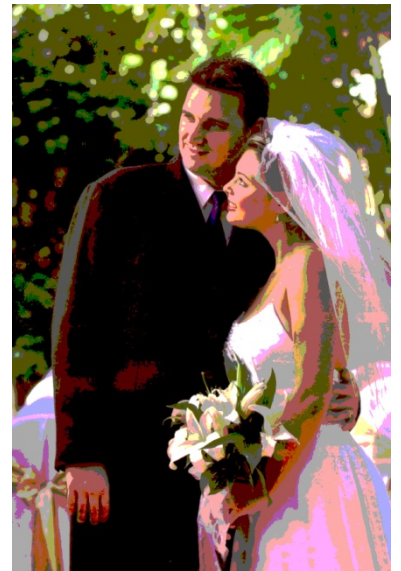


Help defend marriage

Until now marriage – the union of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others, voluntarily entered into for life – has been the only couple relationship that could be registered under New South Wales law. The reason for this unique treatment of marriage is that:

- only marriage provides the best environment for raising children – stability plus complementary male and female role models (Mum and Dad);
- men and women complement each other in marriage - benefiting each other and society.



Now the Keneally government has introduced the **Relationships Register Bill 2010**, to enable unmarried and same-sex couples to register their relationships in the Register of Births, Deaths and Marriages.

On 23 April, government MP Barry Collier, on behalf of Deputy Premier Carmel Tebbutt, said: “Unmarried couples, whether in heterosexual or same-sex relationships, will be able to register their relationships, receive a certificate of registration, and know that their relationship is respected and recognised in New South Wales.”

This Bill is presented as a gift to the people of NSW, but in reality it is a counterfeit of marriage. These registered relationships would be given a social and legal status equivalent to marriage, but without the responsibilities and duties of marriage, which include a promise of exclusivity and lifelong commitment. Your MP needs to hear from you NOW!

What we can do:

Write, email or phone your state lower house and upper house MPs. There is a list of their names, phone numbers and email addresses on the next page. Politely ask them to vote against the Relationships Register Bill, and give one or two reasons why. Include your name and address.

You may find some of the following points helpful, preferably put in your own words:

- Marriage is a unique relationship which benefits children, women, men and society. This unique status of marriage should be maintained by registering marriages – but not unmarried male-female or same-sex relationships.
- The *Relationships Register Bill 2010* would undermine marriage by creating a kind of “marriage-lite”, which would allow male-female couples to gain immediate access to all the rights and financial benefits of marriage without the same level of commitment as marriage.
- *Relationships Register Bill 2010* would undermine marriage by giving same-sex couples similar legal status to married couples. Same-sex couples cannot naturally have children, and society does not benefit from registering these private sexual relationships.
- Children flourish best when raised by married parents. In countries where unmarried couples can register their relationships, marriage has declined, more children are raised in less stable homes and more end up in broken, mostly fatherless, homes.
- Allowing same-sex couples to register their relationships would pave the way for further changes allowing them to acquire children by adoption or surrogacy. This is not in the best interests of our society and its children, who are entitled to a Mum and a Dad.

For more information contact: Rev Steve Estherby, NSW State Officer, FamilyVoice Australia
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