

Media Statement

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On-line survey for Capricornia to express views on marriage act

Federal Member for Capricornia Michelle Landry has set up an on-line survey to allow Capricornia residents to express their view on whether there should be changes to the current marriage act.

The survey, on the MP's website, asks people to lodge *yes, no or undecided* to the question: **Should the Commonwealth Marriage Act of 1961 be amended to recognise same sex marriage or remain as it is?**

"I promised I would respectfully listen to what people in the electorate have to say on the issue and take people's views back to the party room in Canberra,' Ms Landry said.

So far the survey has attracted several hundred responses with the views being fairly even on both sides of the subject.

Ms Landry said she was specifically seeking the opinion of people who actually officially lived within the electoral boundary of Capricornia.

The survey has been designed to allow one response per person.

Last week Ms Landry said the best way to decide the issue was by a plebiscite to the Australian people, rather than by a vote by politicians.

Ms Landry's own view, consistent with the last election, is that marriage is between a man and a woman.

She said many people did not realise that same sex couples were already recognised under most Commonwealth Laws with the same family rights as any de facto couple.

Under the law:

- Same-sex couples are able to access the same tax concessions available to married and opposite-sex de facto couples.
- Superannuation and death benefits can be conferred on same-sex partners and their children.
- Same-sex couples are recognised as a couple for social security or family assistance purposes.
- Same sex couples and their dependent children are considered a family for the purposes of the Medicare or Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) safety nets.
- Same-sex couples are treated in the same way as opposite-sex couples in regards to the means tests related to aged pensions.
- Changes were made to the *Child Support (Assessment) Act 1989* and *Child Support (Registration & Collection) Act 1988* to recognise new parentage laws for same-sex couples. Where same-sex couples separate, they are able to apply for child support.
- And under veterans' affairs allowances, same-sex couples can access certain entitlements from which they were previously precluded.
- For more details visit: <https://www.ag.gov.au/RightsAndProtections/HumanRights/Pages/Samesexreforms.aspx>

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