

Individual response from Jeffrey Gabriel, Democrats candidate for Grayndler

I understand the Democrats lodged a response on behalf of all candidates and the party. I completely subscribe to that response.

I'm sorry I did not lodge an individual reply. We candidates receive dozens of surveys each week and it is hard to formulate individual responses to each and maintain usual responsibilities such as work, family, etc. I do not have any staff with me.

Please do not read this as an excuse or as a sign that I do not care for LGBTI issues. The Democrats have been at the forefront of same sex rights in Australian Parliament longer than any other party. I am faithful to the Democrats policy on the matter, acknowledging the need to end discrimination, recognise gay marriage and civil unions (ie. more than the compromise of relationship registers)

In the recent past, Senator Brian Greig, a Senator from WA between 1999 and 2005 introduced a Bill promoting same sex rights. Most recently, Lyn Allison introduced the Same Sex Same Entitlements Bill designed to eradicate the 58 areas of discrimination identified by HREOC. The Committee looking into that, initiated by the Democrats, had 2 permanent Democrats members and two Observer members were also Democrats. ie. Every single Democrats Senator was on the Committee. I note that there was no representation from the Greens or Family First on the committee but there was from Labor, Liberal and National.

Closer to home, the issue of homophobic violence has reared its head in the media over the past fortnight. At the moment, reports talk about violence around the Oxford St precinct but I am concerned that there may be similar incidents on King St. I deplore this type of violence. It is a hate crime. The perpetrators should be punished to the full extent of the law.

We are also threatened by Pauline Hanson's comments about immigrants carrying AIDS. One's unfortunate illness should not be a barrier to migration and this sort of talk only serves to create fear in the community against LGBTI because of the association with AIDS.

I know this does not answer the survey formally. I am happy for the party reply to do so with the addition of my supplementary comments if necessary.

I wish your lobby group every success in trying to change these draconian laws we live with.

Regards,

Jeffrey Gabriel
Australian Democrats Candidate for Grayndler