



TransGender Victoria Inc

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20 February 2008

The Hon Julia Gillard
Deputy Prime Minister
PO Box 6022
House of Representatives
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Ms Gillard

Imagine applying for a passport and being told you're an "undesirable person." Imagine being told you can't get Medicare rebates because you don't fit into someone else's boxes. Imagine being derided in your workplace or receiving inappropriate service and having no redress. Currently, these scenarios can be a reality for 1.8 million Australians, with implications for their families, friends and colleagues.

I refer to your message in the ourcommunity newsletter distributed on February 13th and your desire to "invest in the human capital of all our people, especially the most disadvantaged." Transgender people face all of the potential disadvantages listed above.

Specifically:

<http://www.comlaw.gov.au/ComLaw/Legislation/LegislativeInstrument1.nsf/frame1odgmentattachments/5681A7871644AF20CA25702200251B7F>

Australian Passports Determination Section 6.3 refers to transgender persons as "Australian citizens in relation to whom the Minister (or a delegate of the Minister) considers it is either unnecessary or undesirable to issue a passport."

Transgender people who have completed surgery and changed their birth certificates have been told they cannot obtain Medicare rebates because the procedure they require is only for those of a certain sex and to give the rebate to them would be committing Medicare fraud. This unfairly increases costs and puts the health, possibly the life of such people at risk. Surely if a person needs an operation a person is entitled to have it. This does not even touch on the question of coverage of sex affirmation surgery and other procedures.

The unemployment rate for transgender people is 9.1%, double the national average. All evidence concludes the primary cause of this disadvantage is discrimination.

The implementation of federal anti-discrimination law covering the attribute of gender identity would enable the effective resolution of these and many other issues.

We add that with the Senate enquiry of the 1990's and the recently released Transnation report <http://www.glhv.org.au/node/398> there is ample evidence to proceed immediately.

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As such, we look forward to confirmation of the implementation of such laws, as is ALP policy, in the life of the current Parliament.

Yours sincerely

SALLY GOLDNER
Spokesperson

CC Nicola Roxon, Robert McLelland, Penny Wong, Louise Pratt, Lindsay Tanner