

media release

LGBTI+ COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS UNITE TO HIGHLIGHT PRIORITIES IN LEAD UP TO VICTORIA'S STATE ELECTION

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18 SEPTEMBER 2018 - Recognising that LGBTI+ Victorians continue to experience discrimination, poorer health outcomes, higher rates of homelessness, and the enjoyment of fewer rights, 30 LGBTI+ community organisations and service providers have endorsed LGBTI+ Priorities — a booklet outlining actions for all political parties to consider in the lead up to Victorian state election on 24 November 2018.

LGBTI+ Priorities outlines 59 actions to make Victoria a fairer and equal place for LGBTI+ people to live, work and raise their families. Among other things, the document highlights issues around advancing equality, addressing discrimination, improving safety and security, and ways of supporting Victorians from the bisexual, intersex, and trans and gender diverse communities.

"Recently, we have seen some incredible progress for our LGBTI+ communities, but the job is not over," said Dale Park, Co-Convenor of the Victorian Gay and Lesbian Rights Lobby.

"Our communities are impacted by family violence, homelessness, discrimination, social isolation, and stigma. As a result, the overall health and wellbeing of our communities is suffering."

LGBTI+ Priorities provides an overview of these priority areas followed by a list of actions to take to address these issues at a state level. The booklet also includes opportunities to lobby the Federal Government to ensure dignity and equality for LGBTI+ people doesn't stop at the Victorian border.

"It's not enough to recognise these issues exist. We need to see constructive and community-informed actions that tackle these challenges head on," said Simon Ruth, CEO of Thorne Harbour Health.

"We look forward to working constructively, as we always have, with the government of the day to protect and promote the health and human rights of people from LGBTI+ communities."

"LGBTI+ communities are incredibly resilient and have shown a great deal of strength in the face of adversity," said Brenda Appleton, Chair of Transgender Victoria.

"But with a united voice, we're offering a way forward through practical policy reforms - such as birth certificate reform which is needed urgently - to ensure Victoria is a place where everyone has the opportunity to fully participate in society with dignity and equality."

Felicity Marlowe, Executive Director of Rainbow Families Victoria added, "Today LGBTI+ communities stand united in our call for a fairer and equal Victoria; a Victoria where we can live, work and raise our families without fear of prejudice and discrimination."

Tony Briffa, Co-Executive Director of Intersex Human Rights Australia said, "We need to protect the human rights of all children. Medically unnecessary and harmful interventions are currently performed on intersex children as non-consenting minors. This is not medicine, it's social engineering, and it needs to stop."

Rebecca Dominguez, President of the Bisexual Alliance of Victoria said, "Bisexual people face unique challenges as a community, such as higher rates of anxiety, and policy responses need to be tailored to meet those challenges."

Anna Brown, Director of Legal Advocacy at the Human Rights Law Centre, and Co-Chair of the Justice Working Group of the Victorian Government LGBTI Task Force said, "Victoria has been leading the way in improving the lives of LGBTI+ people, and this work needs to continue so our communities feel safe and valued for who they are. This resource sets a forward agenda to ensure our political leaders know the key issues of concern for LGBTI+ Victorians."

ENDS

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