



Former prime minister Julia Gillard is once again touring the world speaking on sexism and misogyny in politics,

Yet many Australian women are now living with the consequences of one of the most significant legal changes made under her government, the removal of the biological definitions of “man” and “woman” from the Sex Discrimination Act in 2013.

Those amendments replaced clear biological definitions with the subjective concept of “gender identity”, fundamentally reshaping how the law understands sex-based rights in Australia.

The impact of those changes is now being felt in courtrooms, schools, women’s sport and everyday life.

Businesswoman Sall Grover, founder of the women-only social networking app Giggle, recently lost an appeal in the Federal Court after excluding a biological male identifying as a woman from the platform. The court ruled this constituted unlawful discrimination under the Sex Discrimination Act.

The case has become a flashpoint in the growing national debate over whether women can maintain female-only spaces based on biological sex.

FamilyVoice National Director Peter Downie said the case highlights the deep confusion that results when ideology replaces biological reality in law.

“Women and girls deserve privacy, safety and fairness,” Mr Downie said.

“Laws should protect vulnerable women and uphold biological reality, not punish people for acknowledging basic truths about human nature.”

Mr Downie said Australians were increasingly concerned about the broader effects of gender ideology on families, children and freedom of speech.

“Parents are rightly worried about activist ideology being pushed in schools and medical settings without proper scrutiny,” he said.

“The wellbeing of children must always come before politics or ideology.”

Concerns have also grown internationally following Britain’s Cass Review, which found major weaknesses in the evidence supporting

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Freedom report makes big impact

A new report highlighting growing threats to Christian freedom and freedom of speech in Australia was launched at Parliament House in Canberra on the 28th of May, attracting strong interest from federal parliamentarians and their staff.

The Australian Christian Freedom Report examines the state of Christian freedom in Australia and outlines practical reforms needed to better protect Australians from discrimination based on their faith and convictions.

The launch, attended by 24 parliamentarians and staff members, heard that 92% of the 10,000 Australians surveyed said that it is riskier today to affirm Christian beliefs publicly than five years ago, and that 74 laws have been passed since 2000 restricting Christian freedoms.

National Director Peter Downie attended the launch along with the NSW Chairman Boston White, and said the strong attendance and positive response were highly encouraging.

“We were greatly encouraged by the willingness of several senior politicians to champion law reforms necessary to increase Christian freedoms.”

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Peter Downie speaking at the launch

Human rights bill sparks concern

A controversial Human Rights Bill introduced by the Greens has been referred to the NSW Legislative Assembly's Committee on Community Services for inquiry, sparking renewed debate over freedom of speech, religious liberty, parental rights and the growing influence of activist legal frameworks in New South Wales.

Supporters of the Human Rights Bill 2025 argue the legislation would bring NSW into line with several other Australian states by requiring government agencies and public authorities to consider "human rights" when making laws and administrative decisions.

However, FamilyVoice Australia has warned the bill could create serious unintended consequences for people of faith, pro-family advocates and ordinary Australians seeking to live according to Christian beliefs and values in public life.

FamilyVoice NSW State Director Graeme Mitchell said Christians should pay close attention to the inquiry process and the long-term implications of the legislation.

"Whenever governments begin creating new categories of rights without clearly protecting freedom of religion, conscience and speech, there is a real danger that biblical values and Christian perspectives will increasingly come under pressure," Mr Mitchell said.

He noted that experience in other Australian states, particularly Victoria,

should serve as a warning.

"We do not need to look overseas to see the problems these kinds of laws can create," he said. "Victoria already has extensive human rights and anti-discrimination legislation, yet Christians and faith-based organisations have repeatedly faced complaints, legal pressure and hostility simply for expressing mainstream biblical views on gender, sexuality, family and life issues."

Mr Mitchell said many Australians support freedom of belief inside church buildings, but the real issue is whether Christians remain free to apply biblical teaching and values to all areas of life.

"The concern is not merely about private belief," he said. "The real question is whether Christians are free to live according to biblical values personally, publicly and politically, and to respectfully encourage governments and society to do the same."

He warned that broadly worded human rights laws are often interpreted through an activist lens that elevates some rights while marginalising others.

"Parents, pastors, schools and churches

should not be punished simply for upholding biblical teaching and values," Mr Mitchell said. "A healthy democracy must allow respectful disagreement without fear of legal intimidation."

Even legal groups supportive of a Human Rights Act have acknowledged concerns about definitions, exemptions and how competing rights would be balanced in practice.

Mr Mitchell said the debate ultimately raises deeper questions about the source of freedom itself.

"True freedom is not granted by government, nor is it granted by activist tribunals," he said. "Our freedoms come from God and are grounded in the dignity and value of every human being. Laws should protect those freedoms, not erode them."

The parliamentary inquiry will now receive submissions from legal experts, advocacy groups and members of the public before reporting back to Parliament later this year.

FamilyVoice pushes back against extreme abortion laws

FamilyVoice, along with other pro-life groups in Queensland, are intensifying their calls for reform of the state's abortion laws, warning that current legislation is failing to protect both vulnerable babies and the conscience rights of medical professionals.

At the centre of concern is Queensland's Termination of Pregnancy Act, which permits abortion up to birth in some circumstances. FamilyVoice says recent regulatory changes allowing trained nurses and midwives to perform abortions represent a further expansion of termination services across the state.

FamilyVoice Australia Queensland State Director Andrew McColl said many Queenslanders are deeply uncomfortable with the direction abortion laws have taken.

"Most Australians believe there should be compassion and protection for both mother and child," Mr McColl

said. "What we are seeing instead is a steady removal of safeguards and an increasing normalisation of abortion right through to birth."

A major focus for FamilyVoice is the issue of babies born alive following failed abortions. We have been calling for clear legal requirements compelling hospitals to provide treatment and life-saving care to any baby showing signs of life after a termination procedure.

Mr McColl said this was an issue of basic humanity rather than politics.

"If a child is born alive, that baby deserves medical care and dignity like any other newborn," he said. "Queenslanders are shocked to learn

there is resistance to putting these protections clearly into law."

The Queensland Pro-life coalition, of which FamilyVoice is in the vanguard, have also criticised parliamentary manoeuvres which they say have limited open debate on abortion reform.

Concerns have been raised over what campaigners describe as "gagging" meaningful discussion during the current parliamentary term.

"There should never be fear about debating matters involving human life," Mr McColl said. "A healthy democracy allows respectful discussion,

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Free speech under attack in Victoria

Victoria's Christian community is increasingly concerned about a number of major social and legislative developments that many fear could impact Christian freedoms, freedom of speech, and the ability of churches to operate according to biblical convictions.

One of the most closely watched issues is the Victorian Parliament's inquiry into cults and coercive control. Since the inquiry started, concerns are growing that any resulting legislation could unintentionally affect mainstream Christian churches and ministries.

FamilyVoice Australia Victorian State Director Alan Barron said many Christians support protecting people from genuine abuse and manipulation but fear poorly drafted laws could overreach.

"Christians oppose coercion and abuse," Mr Barron said. "But there is real concern that broad and vague legislation could end up targeting ordinary Christian practices such as discipleship, pastoral counselling, or teaching biblical views on family and marriage."

Mr Barron said churches must be free to preach and practise their faith without fear that normal expressions of Christianity could later be interpreted as coercive behaviour.

"We cannot allow laws aimed at stopping things that rarely happen, to unintentionally undermine the freedom of mainstream churches that have served Victorian communities faithfully for generations," he said.

At the same time, debate continues over the Victorian Government's proposed anti-vilification and hate speech reforms under the Justice Legislation Amendment (Anti-vilification and Social Cohesion) measures.

Supporters argue the laws are necessary to protect minority groups from harassment and intimidation. However, many Christian groups fear the legislation may create uncertainty around expressing traditional biblical beliefs on issues such as gender, sexuality, and biological reality.

Mr Barron said Christians are increasingly concerned that people could face complaints or investigations simply for respectfully expressing long-held beliefs.

"Freedom of religion and freedom of speech are fundamental freedoms in a democratic society," Mr Barron said. "Victorians should not have to fear tribunal action or public punishment simply for expressing biblical convictions respectfully and peacefully."

He said churches, schools, parents, and Christian organisations are calling for stronger safeguards to ensure the laws cannot be used to silence legitimate religious expression.

"These debates are about far more than politics," Mr Barron said. "They go to the heart of whether Australians remain free to live, speak, and raise their families according to their faith."

As Victoria continues to debate these issues, Christian groups are urging lawmakers to carefully balance protections from harm with the preservation of fundamental freedoms that underpin a free and democratic society.

SA Upper House will be a 'thorn in the side' of government

Pro-life campaigners and advocates for family, faith and freedom are giving thanks for the newly-elected South Australian Upper House (the Legislative Council) that will be a 'thorn in the side' of the Malinaskas government, according to FamilyVoice spokesman David d'Lima.

"It was obvious on the election night of 17th March that Labor had smashed the Liberals in the Lower House - but the Upper House counting dragged on, until finally it was clear that conservatives in various parties had won seats," David d'Lima said.

"We rejoiced after six weeks of counting to learn that the Legislative Council has a majority of conservative and pro-life members.

"The result is hailed by pro-life and Christian advocates as a major turning point for the state that will be a thorn in the side of the ALP government."

For the first time in several years, a socially conservative and pro-life majority controls the Upper House, with the potential to challenge the government on issues including abortion, Christian freedom, gender

ideology and freedom of conscience.

The battle for the final seat became a contest between Labor's Clare Scriven (well-known as a pro-life and pro-family campaigner) and a second Greens candidate. Had the Greens secured the seat, the ideological balance of the chamber would have shifted considerably further left.

"Despite serving as a senior minister, the ALP placed Hon Clare Scriven at the ostensibly unwinnable fifth position on the voting ticket," David d'Lima said.

"But the action of pro-life and pro-family voters to complete their ballot papers 'below-the-line' enabled her to defy the odds and secure a second term in the Upper House."

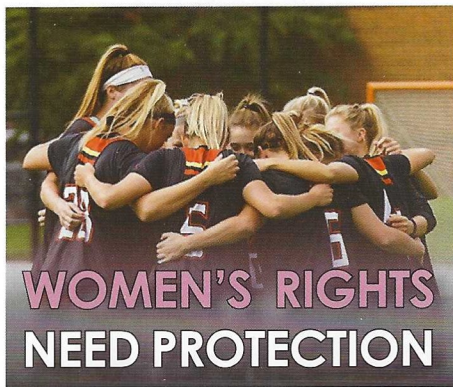
FamilyVoice and other pro-life groups encouraged citizens to vote below-the-

line, giving preference to conservative candidates.

"Many Christians took time to vote carefully, understanding how the Upper House matters enormously and the result makes clear how Christians voting wisely can make a real difference," David d'Lima said.

Accordingly, in a speech at the declaration of results, Mrs Scriven paid tribute to the pro-life community for its electoral support.

David d'Lima said Mrs Scriven is expected to work closely with One Nation Upper House members Cory Bernardi, Carlos Quaremba and Rebecca Hewett, and others to form a voting block of pro-life and pro-family Legislative Councillors - a majority that is unmatched in any other Australian parliamentary chamber.



Freedom report makes big impact

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Mr Downie said the report highlights a reality many Australians instinctively understand: when faith and freedom are weakened, families and society suffer.

The report warns that Australians have increasingly faced investigations, workplace consequences, public criticism and legal challenges for expressing views on issues such as biological sex, marriage, parenting and religious belief.

Parents have been marginalised for questioning school policies, medical professionals have faced pressure for raising concerns about gender ideology, and traditional Christian beliefs are frequently portrayed as harmful or discriminatory.

The report also emphasises that Australia's freedoms are deeply rooted in the nation's Christian heritage and legal traditions.

"Rights do not come from government," Mr Downie said. "Governments should protect fundamental freedoms, not redefine or restrict them. Freedom of religion and freedom of speech are essential pillars of a free society."

FamilyVoice Australia will be working to ensure the report will encourage lawmakers and the wider community to strengthen protections for faith, family and freedom before further freedoms are lost.

FamilyVoice pushes back against extreme abortion laws

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especially on issues of profound moral importance."

Another growing concern is the protection of healthcare workers who object to involvement in abortion procedures on moral or religious grounds. Christian medical professionals and nurses have warned that conscience protections must remain strong, so they are not pressured into participating in practices that violate their beliefs.

Mr McColl said FamilyVoice would continue advocating for life, parental rights and freedom of conscience in Queensland.

"A compassionate society protects the vulnerable and respects freedom of belief," he said. "These are values worth defending."

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puberty blockers and gender-transition treatments for children.

At the same time, female athletes around the world continue to raise concerns about fairness and safety when biological males compete in women's sporting categories.

FamilyVoice believes every person should be treated with dignity and compassion. However, compassion must never require society to deny biological reality or silence those who speak the truth.

"Strong families and a healthy society are built on truth, not confusion," Mr Downie said.

"A society that cannot define what a woman is places women's rights, parental rights and children's wellbeing at serious risk."

As debate continues across Australia and around the world, FamilyVoice is campaigning for a return to clear legal protections for women and girls based on biological sex which can be found on the FamilyVoice website.

familyvoice.org.au/campaigns/tell-mps-reform-the-broken-sex-discrimination-act

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We seek to proclaim the goodness and truth of the Triune God as revealed in His Holy Word the Bible, in the person of Jesus Christ, God the Son, and in creation. We promote God's wise ways for a healthy society where marriage is honoured, human life is respected, families can flourish and fundamental freedoms are enjoyed.

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Celebrating
50 YEARS

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