



ATTORNEY-GENERAL  
THE HON ROBERT McCLELLAND MP

AG-MC11/08687

13 SEP 2011

The Right Reverend John D Harrower OAM  
Bishop of Tasmania  
Anglican Church  
GPO Box 748  
HOBART TAS 7001

Dear Reverend Harrower

Thank you for your letter of 22 July 2011 expressing the Synod of the Anglican Diocese of Tasmania's support for the current definition of marriage.

I acknowledge the Synod's resolution on this issue. The Australian Government believes that the current definition of marriage in the *Marriage Act 1961*—that marriage is between a man and a woman—is appropriate.

The Government also believes that couples who have a mutual commitment to a shared life should be able to have their relationships recognised. The Government supports a nationally consistent framework for relationship recognition to be implemented by the States and Territories. New South Wales, Victoria, Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory have established relationship recognition schemes, where the relationship is legally recognised by the act of registration. Relationships registered under these schemes are also now recognised in a wide range of Commonwealth laws. The Government will continue to encourage other jurisdictions to develop such schemes.

As you may be aware, the Government gave its support to an amended notice of motion on same-sex marriage moved by Mr Adam Bandt MP, Member for Melbourne. The amended motion called on Members of Parliament to gauge the views of their constituents on equal treatment for same-sex couples, including marriage. This is an important discussion for constituents, including the Church, to have with their Members of Parliament.

Thank you for bringing the views of the Synod of the Anglican Diocese of Tasmania to the Government's attention.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Robert McClelland', written in a cursive style.

Robert McClelland