ON POINT

THE NATIONAL NEWSLETTER OF FamilyVoice AUSTRALIA

APRIL 2019

Federal election: ALP to abort our future



Anticipating victory in the May federal election, the ALP seeks to impose radical changes concerning abortion.

In March 2019 the Australian Labor Party announced its resolve to compel all public hospitals to provide taxpayer-funded free abortions, with the threat that hospitals will lose federal funding if they fail to comply. This not only would result in more abortions but it will also encroach upon states' rights and force staff to participate in abortion against conscience. Currently about 80,000 surgical abortions occur in Australia and that number will doubtless increase under the ALP plan.

According to Labor Deputy Leader Tanya Plibersek, who led the charge in her opinion piece published on 9 March in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, "It seems tragic that a woman would bring a child into the world for no reason other than she couldn't afford to have a termination." In fact the tragedy is the increased acceptance and availability of abortion. It is also the case that the policy would create severe angst with the ranks of Labor MPs.

"This attempts to normalize abortion and desensitize us to its inhumanity. But every child's life taken diminishes our humanity," said FamilyVoice National Director Charles Newington.

"As a budget requirement, it will set aside the historic conscience vote on life issues afforded by the ALP to its members of Parliament."

While the Coalition has indicated no plans to force changes on the states in relation to abortion funding, it has joined with state governments in lending support to so-called safe access zone legislation, which is currently under appeal in the High Court. If the legislation survives the High Court challenge (the Kathy Clubb case), sensitive pro-life ministry near to abortion facilities will remain illegal in Tasmania and Victoria.

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Federal election issues

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RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

The Morrison Government's response to the Ruddock review includes commitments towards (a) Religious Discrimination Bill to protect against discrimination based on religious belief or activity; (b) amending the Charities Act 2013 to clarify that advocacy of a traditional view of marriage would not, of itself, amount to a 'disqualifying purpose'; (c) introduce interpretive clauses in anti-discrimination legislation to reflect the equal status in international law of all human rights, including freedom of religion; (d) establish a Freedom of Religion Commissioner at the Australian Human Rights Commission.

The ALP national platform document includes a commitment to "strengthen laws and expand programs against discrimination and harassment on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, sex characteristics and queer status" (Chapter 10, Point 84), covering all workplaces, including students and school staff (Chapt 10, Pt. 60). This means no religious group could hire staff based on Biblical values.

BIOLOGY OVER IDEOLOGY

The Coalition is planning to override state laws to prevent a person's gender from being stripped from their birth certificate. "This identity war now poses some pretty serious risks. I can't allow states to do it (remove gender)," Assistant Treasurer Stuart Robert told the *Daily Telegraph*. The ALP National Conference in December and their national platform document both commit to the Yogyakarta Principles. The 31st principle is to mandate genderless identity documents, including passports and birth certificates. The Labor national platform also promises to appoint an LGBT 'anti-discrimination' commissioner (Ch.10. Pt. 90), provide subsidised "sex-change" operations (Pt. 74), and remove access "discrimination" to human reproductive technology regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity or relationship status (Pt. 102).

FREEDOM OF SPEECH

The Labor party national platform argues that "when prejudice against LGBTIQ people contributes to harassment by the written or spoken word, such harassment causes actual harm, not simply mere offence" and this "must be subject to effective sanctions". It then states, "Labor will ensure that anti-discrimination law provides such effective sanctions" (Chapt. 10, Point 137). FamilyVoice believes this policy seems intended to convict preachers of "harassment" if they preach a Biblical view of sexuality and same sex relations. Since the written word can "cause actual harm" this Labor policy may also indirectly suggest that the Bible is "hate speech".

FamilyVoice has enclosed a 'Know the Key Issues' election guide with this On Point issue. Order more copies by phoning FamilyVoice. Costs may apply for large quantities. Don't forget to join our **I Believe and I Vote** *campaign for religious freedom.*

Go to ***familyvoice.org.au/ibelieveandivote.***

Tas. gender law "reckless"

The Tasmanian government's "Justice and Related Legislation (Marriage Amendments) Bill 2018" has been radically amended by the Greens and ALP, and will thus bring great harm to society.

The bill, which passed the Legislative Council by eight votes to six on April 4, would permit anyone aged 16 years or older to change their registered sex or gender without requiring any documentation.

Upon a self-appointed 'gender affirmation', no state law will stop a biological male from enrolling in girls' schools, living in the girls' accommodation, and sharing the girls' bathroom and shower facilities.

It will also enable a biological male to transfer to female prisons, regardless of inmate objections.

A female hospital patient requesting a female nurse may be denied – if the nurse has been given "recognition" as a woman.

In a separate Bill, the Council also voted 8-6 to amend the Anti-Discrimination Act to give gender expression, including names and references, protected status. This means the alleged act of 'misgendering' someone in Tasmania, despite the person's biological sex, may be sanctioned by a tribunal. The bill awaits Legislative Assembly approval, which may be as early as April 30.

In an opinion piece published in Tasmania on 19 March by the Hobart *Mercury* newspaper, pastor Campbell Markham warned that queer and gender theory "is flowing like vinegar from our university lecture halls into the laws of our land." Markam urged the Tasmanian Legislative Council to reject "reckless, shortsighted changes to our law, changes which expose Tasmanians to existential discomfort, anxiety and real harm."



Join Pastor Campbell Markham and urge Parliament to protect Tasmanians, "especially those who are weak and vulnerable".

We encourage our Tasmanian supporters to pray against these reckless, shortsighted proposals and raise concern with members of the Legislative Assembly.

Both bills await approval by the Legislative Assembly (lower house), which may occur as soon as April 30.

State Round-up

LORD'S PRAYER UNJUSTLY ATTACKED IN VICTORIA

In mid-March, Fiona Patten of the Reason Party claimed that Victoria is a secular society whose State Parliament should not open with the Lord's prayer.

"Most religious people I speak to are surprised to find out this is how we start every day here," Ms Patten said.

Her remarks prompted Premier Daniel Andrews to suggest each day commence with a multi-faith ceremony.

In response, FamilyVoice Victorian Director Peter Stevens has urged MPs to continue opening daily sessions of Parliament with Christian prayer.

"The custom reminds MPs that our moral base, laws and customs do not have a multi-faith foundation but are anchored in Christianity," he said. "While respecting people who hold non-Christian faiths or none whatsoever, we are all equally the beneficiaries of the Judaeo-Christian worldview. Furthermore, the majority of people continue to self-identify with Christianity and the Lord's Prayer is valued by all manner of non-Christian faiths."

On 20 March the Parliament of Victoria referred the matter to its procedures committee for review.

WA ASSISTED SUICIDE "SHAM" CONSULTATION

A panel of Western Australian experts led by former State Governor Malcolm McCusker will consult the public as it drafts a bill for voluntary euthanasia - in a move rejected as a "sham" by FamilyVoice WA State Director Darryl Budge.

The expert panel's consultation is expected to discourage any objections to euthanasia. Opinions against assisted killing legislation "cannot be considered" under the panel's terms of reference, according to its latest discussion paper.

"Public consultations in Perth and regional centres will censor those who desire holistic, accessible palliative care and reject euthanasia," Darryl Budge said.



Darryl Budge (right) with WA pro-life advocate Nick Goiran MLC

"Ironically, the government released its discussion paper about euthanasia on the same day as the Commonwealth released its National Plan to Respond to the Abuse of Older Australians, which highlights 'distressing accounts of abuse of older people'."

The closing date for responses to the public consultation is 24 May 2019. Go to our website for details on how to submit.

SA ABORTION UPDATE

Debate on abortion in the South Australian Parliament has been shelved while the Law Reform Institute conducts a review, but a new problem has arisen federally with the ALP policy to force public hospitals to provide abortion.

In a media release, FamilyVoice National Secretary David d'Lima pointed out that the ALP can expect a strong backlash from the States, if the party wins government nationally and forces public hospitals to perform abortion.

"The States will struggle to find quality medical personnel who are prepared to provide surgical abortion, owing to its inherent brutality. Healthcare professionals who join the healing vocation to promote life will be upset if they are effectively forced into providing abortion," he said.

In Adelaide (in 1992) the former Queen Victoria Hospital was unable to conduct mid-term abortions, as nurses were too upset to assist.

Building relationships in Vic

FamilyVoice Victoria Director Peter Stevens has begun building relationships with members of Victoria's 59th Parliament.

"With the Victorian upper house being dominated by 11 cross-benchers from Justice party, Liberal Democrats, Sustainable Australia, Transport Matters, Animal Justice party, Reason Party, Greens, and Shooters, Fishers and Farmers, FamilyVoice will need to connect to MPs with widely diverging views, in order to promote family values, " Peter said.

He recently thanked upper house MP Bernie Finn (pictured at left, beside Peter Stevens). Mr Finn continues a long-standing support for family, faith, freedom and the rights of the unborn.



ACT chaplaincy update

FamilyVoice is warning that recent moves in the ACT against the school chaplaincy program are setting a dangerous precedent that has implications for the viability of the national scheme. While the Morrison Government has granted $247 million to pay for around 3,000 chaplains in schools across the nation, the ACT development may signal a nation-wide rethink on chaplaincy, should the ALP achieve victory in the forthcoming federal election.

"The chaplaincy program enjoys widespread approval among parents, teachers and schools," said FamilyVoice ACT/NSW Director Greg Bondar. "There is absolutely no groundswell of concern warranting its removal."

According to education minister Simon Birmingham, "A secular state is about there not being a state religion. It is not to say that there isn't a role for people of faith."

FROM THE National Director



Dear Friend,

We are glad that NSW voters opposed pro-euthanasia and pro-'Safe Schools' policies at the ballot box last month, as they rejected Labor and the Nationals.

However, as our cover story notes, our nation is facing an even greater juncture at the federal election expected in May. The Labor party promises to impose abortion services on all public hospitals, appoint an LGBT commissioner which will impact every religious organisation, and subsidise 'transgender' surgeries.

To aid our work to winsomely win hearts and minds, we welcome back Peter Stevens as our Victorian State Director after a short stint as a political candidate.

We also welcome Greg Bondar as our NSW State Director. Greg comes to the role with a background as a senior executive within the not-for-profit, government and corporate sectors for over 30 years combined. He and his wife Lynne have three adult children and recently celebrated 40 years of marriage.

Greg was formerly the Federal and NSW State Director for the Christian Democratic Party of Australia (Fred Nile Group) where he oversaw the 2016 federal election and various by-elections. He was also a Senior Adviser to the Minister for Transport and Regional Development in the first term of the Howard Government. Greg started his career in banking and then moved to become a secondary school teacher in the St George area of Sydney and was CEO in such industry sectors as property, health, engineering, tourism, mining, and former board member of St George Community Transport, St George Community Housing and Bendigo Community Bank Bexley.

"FamilyVoice Australia welcomes back Peter Stevens... and Greg Bondar as our NSW State Director... (who has) a background as a Senior Executive for over 30 years."

In other news, Stuart Piggin, co-author of *The Fountain of Public Prosperity: Evangelical Christians in Australian History 1740-1914*, recently toured Australia and shared how Christians living powerfully for God have blessed our culture in generations past. The many who heard him were very thankful for his insight and challenged to carry on the efforts of previous generations.

Please pray with us in this battle, and thank you for strengthening our efforts financially as our nation faces many challenges ahead.

Your brother in Christ,

Charles Newington

Charles Newington, National Director



FamilyVoice NSW State Director Greg Bondar (left) talking on air with Vision Radio's Neil Johnson ahead of the NSW election

EXTRACTS

Articles or extracts from this magazine may be used for other publications, provided that the reprint includes the following notice:

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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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FamilyVoice AUSTRALIA

FamilyVoice Australia Inc

4th Floor, 68 Grenfell St,
Adelaide SA 5000

Phone: 1300 365 965
Fax: 08 8223 5850
Email: office@familyvoice.org.au

familyvoice.org.au

/familyvoiceaustralia
@familyvoiceaust