



1 February 2009

Mr Rodney Croome and Ms Jen Van Achteren  
Tasmanian Gay and Lesbian Rights Group

Email: [rodney.croome@tglrg.org](mailto:rodney.croome@tglrg.org))

Dear Mr Croome and Ms Van Achteren

Thank you for your Email of 22 January 2010 seeking responses by the Tasmanian Liberals to a series of questions in relation to the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex communities in Tasmania.

I have pleasure in responding on behalf of all Tasmanian Liberal Members and candidates.

- 1. Will your party amend the Relationships Act so that relationships formally registered in other jurisdictions will automatically be recognised as registered relationships in Tasmania.**

In government we would consider recognition of other relationships duly registered under equivalent legislation in other Australian jurisdictions, provided those relationships would be eligible to be registered in Tasmania, but any reciprocity would require the agreement of other jurisdictions to exchange information which might have other implications, including on privacy. We would be happy to consult further with the Tasmanian Gay and Lesbian Rights Group on this matter.

- 2. Will your party amend the Anti-Discrimination Act to create a new ground for discrimination – gender identity – to provide more effective protection from discrimination for transgender and intersex people?**

The Tasmanian Liberals have no current plans to consider such an amendment, but we would consider any approach in government.

- 3. Will your party commit to not providing any more exemptions on the grounds of religion in the Anti-Discrimination Act?**

Exemptions under the Anti-Discrimination Act are granted by the Anti-Discrimination Commissioner. Apart from a commitment to respond to a request to all parties from the Catholic Education Office to allow the church, and other faith-based schools, to positively discriminate in favour of students practising their faith in matters such as school enrolment, the Tasmanian Liberals have no other plans to amend the Act.

- 4. Will your party amend the Adoption Act to allow same-sex couples to be assessed, on the same basis as opposite sex couples, as potential adoptive parents for the children relinquished by other people?**

The Tasmanian Liberals have no current plans to change the Adoption Act in this area.

- 5. Does your party support a state Charter of Rights?**

The Tasmanian Liberals see some merit in moves to more clearly define both rights and responsibilities, but we do not support a Bill of Rights.

- 6. Will your party review and resource formal liaison between the LGBTI community and government agencies, especially health, police, education, tourism and justice, to ensure it is as effective as possible?**

We believe governments and their agencies should consult, on a regular basis, with all stakeholder groups, both formally and informally. This process should not require additional resourcing.

- 7. Will your party create policy positions within existing government policy-making bodies to ensure policy on LGBTI issues is on a par with policy for other minority and disadvantaged communities?**

Our approach to government would be to ensure care is taken to ensure no minority or disadvantaged group is discriminated against, not just LGBTI issues.

- 8. Will your party create a ministerial portfolio on LGBTI issues to ensure there is high-level leadership on these issues within government?**

No, but in government we would ensure regular liaison and that relevant Ministers take proper account of representations made when developing and implementing policy.

- 9. Will your party increase funding for existing LGBTI community support, counselling and education services, or fund new services, where an unmet need has been shown to exist?**

We would consider any approach on merit, as we would with any other approach by a community group, but the level of assistance will always be governed by the State's fiscal situation and competing priorities among community groups.

- 10. How does your party intend to meet the Tasmania Together goals of reducing discrimination and violence against LGBTI people?**

The Tasmanian Liberals abhor violence and discrimination against any group and will take the Tasmania Together goals into consideration when implementing or developing policy. We also support moves by the Federal Government to deliver a national plan to reduce violence with the intention to implement Respectful Relationships program for school-age young people to change behaviours. While this is primarily aimed at violence against women and children, we see this as an ideal opportunity to tackle race-related and discrimination-related violence of all types.

- 11. Will your party allocate funding for police, health worker and teacher training in sexual and gender diversity to meet relevant Tasmania Together goals?**

We would consider any approach on merit, as we would with any other approach by a community group, but the level of assistance will always be governed by the State's fiscal situation and competing priorities among community groups.

- 12. Will your party provide funding for classroom anti homophobia and affirming diversity programs which have been proven to reduce levels of prejudice and bullying in school environments?**

See above, in relation Respectful Relationships program. May I suggest the Group make representations to the Federal Government about the content of their intended program. In addition, the Liberals believe that support staff such as appointment of additional support staff, including school psychologists and social workers are an important ingredient in our schools.

**13. Does your party commit to not authorising, publishing or distributing, or helping other organisations or individuals to authorise, publish or distribute, election materials which appeal to fear and hostility towards LGBTI people and their human rights.**

Yes – and as Parliamentary Leader I have made that commitment publicly.

**14. Please feel free to outline commitments in areas that may not be listed above.**

In government, we would look at options to deal with transgender persons who might be in prison, either serving a sentence or on remand, to ensure that the facilities available are appropriate to their requirements.

Liberal policies, as announced, are available at [www.tasliberal.com.au](http://www.tasliberal.com.au).

Yours sincerely

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

**Will Hodgman MP  
Leader of the Opposition**