



Views on marriage and the people's vote on marriage from political parties Election July 2, 2016

The Australian Christian Lobby sent all parties contesting the election a questionnaire. One of the questions related to marriage and support for the people's vote. Unfortunately not all parties responded. ACL has published all the responses that were received at http://www.acl.org.au/2016_federal_election.

ACL Question: Marriage is a bedrock institution for society and redefining marriage has consequences. Will your Party guarantee that a peoples' vote on redefining marriage will take place and that there will be no changes to the Marriage Act until the Australian people have cast their votes in a national ballot?

Below are the party responses in alphabetical order.

For more responses to other ACL questions visit:
http://www.acl.org.au/2016_federal_election

Australian Christians: Our preference is that the Marriage Act remains as it is, without any plebiscite or referendum. Furthermore, we would seek to formally cement the current definition of marriage into the Constitution so that this discussion is not repeated each generation.

A people's vote is the lesser of two remaining evils. The government must not be permitted to change the definition of marriage without consultation; hence a people's vote is better than unilateral government action. However, the definition of marriage has not changed for thousands of years and should not be changed now, even with a majority opinion in today's society.

Christian Democratic Party: We will strongly support a plebiscite. This issue is too important for politicians to decide on. A plebiscite will only be possible if there are strong supporters in the Senate, which is why it's important the Christian Democratic Party is elected in NSW.

During the plebiscite we are committed to fighting alongside the ACL, Marriage Alliance and the churches to support marriage as a union between one man and one woman.

Democratic Labour Party: The DLP drafted a Bill in 2014 'Constitutional Alteration (Recognition of Marriage) Bill' which called for a referendum to include a new section (section 51 xxiA) in the constitution. This new section would forever enshrine Marriage as the 'union of one man and one woman, to the exclusion of all others, voluntarily entered into for life'. This Bill was presented to the Liberal Party three days before Prime Minister Abbott announced his intention to hold a plebiscite or referendum on the marriage issue.

The DLP believes this legislation must be introduced and a referendum held to end this matter once and for all.

Family First: Yes. We will fight to retain the above definition of marriage and, if we could, we would even insert it into the Constitution via a referendum to preserve it for all time. However, the Labor, Greens and Nick Xenophon Team parties want to redefine marriage without a public vote ('plebiscite'). We support a public vote on the question, but not this year as the Coalition is proposing.

We need to have a thorough and free-speech protected debate on how redefining marriage will affect the rights of parents, the rights of children, free speech and freedom of conscience in Australia. Having thoroughly considered those questions, we do not think the Australian public will want to redefine marriage.

Health Australia Party: Yes, although bearing in mind we will only have one vote per member.

Jacqui Lambie Network: I have been a strong proponent of a plebiscite to determine the issue of same-sex marriage for as long as I have been in the Senate. While I personally believe marriage is between a man and a woman, I will support the decision of the people.

Labor Party: Labor opposes Malcolm Turnbull's \$160 million divisive plebiscite on marriage equality. The Constitution makes it clear that it is Federal Parliament's role and responsibility to legislate on the issue of marriage, and Parliament has always done so in the past. A Labor Government will legislate for marriage equality within the first 100 days of the next Parliament, in recognition that love between two people of the same gender is of equal meaning, equal value and entitled to equal respect.

Many Australians hold deep and diverse beliefs about the meaning of marriage, which must also be respected. Recognising this, Labor policy will continue to support a conscience vote on marriage equality in the next Parliament. Labor policy provides that, should a change to the Marriage Act take place in the future, ministers of religion will not be required to perform ceremonies for same-sex couples. This preserves Labor's longstanding support for the appropriate protection of religious freedom of all people.

Liberal National Party: The Coalition believes that a decision on same-sex marriage should be made by a vote by all Australians via a plebiscite as soon as possible after the election.

If the majority of Australians vote 'yes' in the plebiscite, the Parliament should respect that decision and legalise same-sex marriage in Australia.

Mature Australia Party: Mature Australia believes there should be NO change to Australian law on the legal definition and recognition of "marriage" unless or until any proposed change has been voted on (for or against) by "the people" at a properly-constituted and specific public referendum on the issue.

We believe this is not an issue that an elite number of elected MPs should be entitled or allowed to decide, without direct reference (by vote) to the people, to give them a mandate for changeor to refuse it.

Sex Party: No. This is what we elect a parliament to do. Redefining marriage does indeed have consequences. It will say to the LGBTIQ+ community that the days of officially being second class citizens are over. A national vote on the issue would also have consequences.

The anti-equality groups would unleash a torrent of hate-filled homophobic attacks, and we know that homophobia literally kills. Not just in Orlando, but in our homes here in Australia. We cannot conscionably support a public argument about whether people deserve basic rights.

Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party: Yes

For full list of responses to ACL's questions visit:
http://www.acl.org.au/2016_federal_election