



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



**THE SENATE**

**PROOF**

**MATTERS OF PUBLIC IMPORTANCE**

**Marriage Equality**

**SPEECH**

**Monday, 17 August 2015**

BY AUTHORITY OF THE SENATE

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## SPEECH

<b>Date</b> Monday, 17 August 2015	<b>Source</b> Senate
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<b>Questioner</b>	<b>Responder</b>
<b>Speaker</b> Lambie, Sen Jacqui	<b>Question No.</b>

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**Senator LAMBIE** (Tasmania) (16:48): I rise to briefly contribute to the debate on the matter of public importance. It is clear that Mr Abbott is one of the worst prime ministers Australia has ever had. His leadership has failed on many issues, including same-sex marriage. Mr Abbott lacks the ability to unite and inspire ordinary Australians. If he were a leader who was sensitive to the needs and wishes of the Australian people, he would have supported my call and other crossbench senators' calls to hold a separate vote on same-sex marriage at the next election.

Let the people decide what our definition of marriage is, and let's get into talking about the out-of-control youth unemployment rates; organised criminals making big dollars selling ice to our kids; our pensioners struggling to pay their heating bills; our public hospitals, which are full, and Australians needlessly dying on record health waiting lists; homeless, desperate and suicidal veterans; and threats to prime agricultural land and hardworking farmers.

I strongly oppose any discrimination against LGBT people. LGBT Australians are very important and valued members of our community. I am sorry if my religious views have offended some LGBT people, but, just as non-Christian religious traditions are expected to be respected by all Australians, I would like my sacred Christian traditions respected as well.

A vote by the Australian people at the next election will quickly, fairly and legitimately settle the matter of same-sex marriage. If Mr Abbott understood leadership, he would realise that a vote by the people on this matter would also help to quickly heal the hurt that is created by this debate. The government talk about saving money and they talk about doing the heavy lifting. This is an opportunity to take it to the next election, save a lot of money, and once and for all get this done and get this voted on.