



Speech by

Dr Mark Robinson

MEMBER FOR CLEVELAND

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MARRIAGE ACT

 **Dr ROBINSON** (Cleveland—LNP) (2.50 pm): Marriage is an important institution in Queensland society. I have made it no secret that, in my view, the definition of 'marriage' as found in the Commonwealth Marriage Act should not be changed. I commend the federal Leader of the Opposition, Tony Abbott, and other federal colleagues in Canberra such as Kevin Andrews, Barnaby Joyce, Stuart Robert, Ron Boswell, Andrew Laming, Bert Van Manen and many others for their principled stance in holding the line on marriage. One problem with expanding the definition of 'marriage' is where to stop. The gay lobby want it to include gay and lesbian relationships but some polyamorous groups want the change to allow more than two individuals to enter a marriage. If the definition is thrown wide open, where does it land?

Another problem is that most social science researchers and most Queenslanders believe that it is in the best interests of a child's full development to grow up with a loving mum and a loving dad. Health minister Lawrence Springborg summed it up in the 2009 debate on Labor's surrogacy laws that included same-sex parenting, making the point that, while circumstances may create situations in life, the states should not legislate to allow it to be acceptable in Queensland. He went on to quote a Galaxy poll from November 2009 which found that 86 per cent of Australians believe that, ideally, wherever possible children should be raised by the biological mother and biological father. I agree with the minister and I believe that not much has changed in that regard in Queensland over the last three years.

On the same bill Archbishop Bathersby wrote—

The Catholic Church finds it difficult to support legislation which places a child in a situation where there is no mother and father as would normally be expected. It is difficult to know in advance the impact such legislation may have on children, or the damage it may do to the institution of the family which is the foundation of our society.

Pope Benedict XVI has said—

The best chance children have of developing properly is found in a family because of the uniquely complementary roles played by husband and wife ... they need to dwell, grow and live with both parents, because the maternal and paternal figures complement one another in the education of children and the formation of their personality and identity.

Queenslanders are naturally socially conservative and are wary of any moves in Canberra to push a same-sex marriage and same-sex parenting agenda on them. Just because radical Greens Senator Sarah Hanson-Young and other Canberra lefties huff and puff that it is inevitable and politicians must accept the demands of the Greens, that does not make it so. Archbishop Mark Coleridge cautions MPs that the experience in some places suggests that there is even a slippery slope in various jurisdictions from registration of civil partnerships to same-sex marriage. In closing and in summary, I agree with Archbishop Coleridge, who said—

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mrs Cunningham): Order! Stop the clock please. Member, can you give an assurance that you are not straying into areas of debate in this chamber?

Dr ROBINSON: Yes, I am about to finish the speech and I make no reference to Queensland's bill that is before the House.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Start the clock. I call the member for Cleveland.

Dr ROBINSON: I am talking about the federal Marriage Act. In closing and in summary, I agree with Archbishop Coleridge, who said that we should be disturbed by anything that reduces traditional marriage.