

**To: Honourable Anna Bligh, Premier of Queensland, Australia**

**With a copy to:** Honourable Attorney-General Paul Lucas

**From: John Frame**, 82 Main Avenue, Wavell Heights 4012 Queensland Ph: 07 3350 1562

**Subject: Change.org petition with 254 signatures, as attached, calling for the Queensland Government to allow all Queensland youth equality at 16, free from the threat of prosecution for sodomy.**

The petition was opened by John Frame on 14 Dec 2011, closed 28<sup>th</sup> January 2012:

<http://www.change.org/petitions/help-support-vital-equal-age-of-consent-reform-in-queensland-australia>

**Attachments:** pages 2 and 3: "Why this is important" and "Why people signed"  
pages 4 to 12: complete printout of the 254 signatures

Dear Premier,

We request your very urgent attention to passing legislation which will truly equalise the age of consent at 16 for the equal benefit and protection of all Queensland youth.

This is achieved by simply removing Section 208 of the Criminal Code - which is the only remaining Sodomy Law in force anywhere in Australia.

The Queensland Sodomy Law actively discriminates against gay male youths aged 16 and 17, by defining them as inferior to their heterosexual peers. This law exposes them to the risk of criminal prosecution with a severe penalty of up to 14 years imprisonment, merely for engaging in sexual activity.

All youth have a right to equal treatment under the law, and that includes equal benefit of the law, without discrimination.

True equality under the law is vital for the reinforcement of self-esteem, and for the reduction of the risk of self-harm and suicide.

The Queensland Labor Party Policy Platform already includes a clear commitment to this reform. Section 7.9 of the Justice and Governance Chapter, states: "Labor will ensure uniformity of age among laws relating to the age of consent for lawful sexual activity."

We ask that you ensure that equal age of consent reform is passed as a matter of priority early in 2012, while your Labor Party still holds a clear majority. The Opposition LNP have firmly declared that they will never support this reform.

The health and well being of Queensland's youth lies in your hands. Please treat them with the same loving care as you have devoted to your own children.

Yours sincerely,

**John Frame and 253 other signatories from around the world**

## Why This Is Important

Queensland is the only region in Australia which does not have a truly equal age of consent for all youth. True equality under the law is vital for the reinforcement of self-esteem, and for the reduction of the risk of bullying, self-harm, depression and suicide.

All youth have a right to equal treatment under the law, and that includes equal benefit of the law, without discrimination. The age of consent must be made equal at 16 for all youth, regardless of their gender or sexual orientation.

Section 208 of the Criminal Code is a “sodomy law” which discriminates particularly against gay and bisexual male youths aged 16 and 17 by criminalising their potential lovemaking, exposing them to the risk of criminal prosecution with a penalty of up to 14 years imprisonment.

Urgent reform action very early in 2012 is absolutely necessary because the Parliamentary majority held by the socially progressive Queensland Labor Party is certain to be lost to the ultra conservative Liberal/National Party in the impending election.

Strong statements of support for this reform have been made by former High Court Justice Hon Michael Kirby AC CMG, psychologist Paul Martin, Qld Anti-Discrimination Commissioner Susan Booth, GP Dr Wendell Rosevear OAM, Equal Rights Activist Peter Tatchell, PFLAG national spokesperson Shelley Argent OAM and by many others. Those statements are stored as a resource for public access along with comprehensive related information at: [www.queerradio.org/AgeOfConsent.htm](http://www.queerradio.org/AgeOfConsent.htm)

## Why People Signed – *all of the comments posted on the Petition webpage:*

[Michael Carden](#): “This archaic law should have been abolished in full back in 1990. That it's still around victimising young people is a disgrace”

[Nerrilyn Diefenbach](#): “These changes need to be made. Discrimination is wrong and detrimental to the health and well being of these young people.”

[Gai Lemon](#): “This is an outdated and unequal law that presumes young gay men do not deserve the right to freely express their love, and if there's one thing we need more of in this world, it is the freedom to love.”

[Domenic Papa](#): “Its silly either raise the age of consent to 18 so sex becomes an adult activity or lower it to 16 for all but just make it equal!”

[Barbara Tomlinson](#): “There is absolutely no logical or medical or psychological reason to discriminate between Gay and heterosexual youth as to Age of Consent. The law as it currently stands, reflects an era of prejudice and discrimination, pure and simple; and it is overdue for a change.”

[Michele Lindsay](#): “I am greatly concerned about the serious health repercussions of the unequal age of consent: 16 and 17 year olds can only be taught about safe heterosexual sex at school and not about safe homosexual sex, given its illegality.”

[Michael Bouwman](#): “well it's just discriminatory, so why should it be on the Statute books a moment longer?”

[Jessica Smith](#): “Different ages of consent send a clear message that same-sex sexuality is somehow 'deviant'. Surely we can move on from this outdated idea in the 21st century?”

[Alan Pastman](#): “It's tough enough to be a teen”

[Angela Yin](#): “This is a pretty silly law. I don't think there should be laws relating to the type of sex people over 16 have - if we have this, why not have another law about the age in which you can engage in oral sex etc? This one has got to go.”

[Ken Underwood](#): “Lets get equality for all finally, we are in the 21 st Century after all.”

[Selwyn Smith](#): “I want equality.”

[Matthew Sinclair](#): “This law needs to be changed to promote equality amongst the people. As long as safe-sex is promoted and there is sufficient sexual education for teens, then the benefits should be nothing but positive. There are risks (such as STIs and pregnancy) associated with vaginal sex (legal at age 16), so it doesn't make sense to discriminate on anal sex, which for the most part discriminates only against gay youth.”

[Margaret Stewart](#): “The law as it stands seems to assume that heterosexual sex is OK at a younger age than gay sex. This makes no sense under any rationale!”

[Paul Mitchell](#): “Section 208 of the 1899 Criminal Code of Queensland needs to be repealed. Also make the criminal laws stronger (to a minimum of life in prison) for any adult who has any sexual conduct with any child.”

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