



South Australia and marriage equality

Can South Australia enact its own same-sex marriage law?

Yes. Constitutional expert, Professor George Williams, has identified a constitutional avenue which allows states to legislate for same-sex marriage.

The power to legislate for marriage is **shared concurrently** by the Commonwealth and state governments. This means that if the Commonwealth doesn't legislate for a particular kind of marriage – in this case, same-sex marriage – that power falls to the states.

State same-sex marriage bills have also been introduced in Tasmania and have been flagged in NSW and Victoria.

South Australia now has a unique opportunity to make a powerful statement about diversity and inclusion – by allowing same-sex couples to marry.

“Every federal power in section 51 of the constitution is held concurrently with the States. Just as the Commonwealth can legislate for marriage so can the states.”

Prof. George Williams
Constitutional law expert, UNSW

Boost to small business

Marriage equality also benefits the economy. In Massachusetts the economic dividend from same-sex weddings was a boost of **\$111 million** over five years.

According to a study by economist Prof Lee Badgett, if a state like South Australia were to become the first state to allow same-sex marriage it would benefit by at least \$96 million, with most going to small businesses catering to the wedding market.

Boost to mental health outcomes

Reviewing the extensive evidence on marriage and mental health, the **Australian Psychological Society** and the American Psychological Association have concluded

Prominent South Australian parliamentary supporters

- **Jay Weatherill**, Premier of South Australia
- **Mike Rann**, former Premier
- **Isobel Redmond**, Liberal Opposition Leader
- **Simon Birmingham**, Liberal Senator
- **Penny Wong**, Federal Finance Minister
- **Mark Butler**, Fed. Minister for Mental Health
- **Amanda Vanstone**, former Liberal Senator
- **Kate Ellis**, Federal Minister

that legislating for same-sex marriage improves mental health outcomes for same-sex attracted people.

Legislation that validates and values same-sex relationships would have a meaningful impact on the incidence of anxiety disorders, depression and substance abuse among same-sex attracted Australians.

Boost to state's reputation

South Australia was the first state to decriminalise homosexuality, and now South Australia has an opportunity to be the first state to legalise marriage equality.

Doing so would boost South Australia's reputation as a state that truly values, recognises and respects the contribution of all its citizens whether LGBTI or otherwise.

“Aussies always look back with pride when we end discrimination affecting our fellow Aussies. Supporting marriage equality is a reform that will do us proud. It's time we ended this crazy law that stops some of the most loving and committed couples from getting hitched.”

Jimmy Barnes
Aussie rock legend

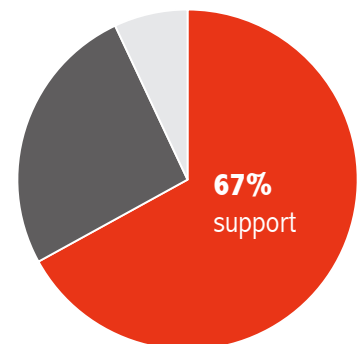
Prominent South Australian supporters

- **Jimmy Barnes**, Aussie rock legend
- **David Campbell**, Musician and TV Presenter
- **Rev. Ian Hunter**, Minister, Semaphore Uniting Church, SA
- **Rabbi Shoshana Kaminsky**, Beit Shalom Progressive Synagogue, SA
- **Rev. Leanne Jenski**, Blackwood Uniting Church, Adelaide

Public support higher than other states

More than two-thirds of South Australians support marriage equality, a figure higher than most other states.

Support for marriage equality in South Australia



Support in South Australia

- Galaxy Poll February 2012: 67% support; 26% oppose.
- Nielsen Poll November 2011: 67% support; 28% oppose.

Support nationally

- Galaxy Poll February 2012: 62% support; 33% oppose.
- Nielsen Poll November 2011: 62% support; 31% oppose.