To those concerned,

I would like to state my firm opposition to the proposed Bill Human Rights and Anti-Discrimination Bill 2012 in its current form. I am surprised that we have learned nothing from the disastrous attempts to enforce a similar Bill in Victoria where its sole purpose was seemingly for one religious group to carry out a petty vendetta against another. With this in mind I was more than surprised to read Clause 19 of this Bill:

> *(2) To avoid doubt,* ***unfavourable*** *treatment of the other person includes (but is not limited to) the following:*
> *(a) harassing the other person;*
> *(b) other conduct that offends, insults or intimidates the other person.*

which any forward-thinking persons would understand is an invitation to chaos, as we have increasingly seen lately in sensationalised media that ours is the generation who are able to find offence in *anything*. Throwing open courthouse doors to anyone or any group determined to bring down another and needing only a perceived offense to bring accusation is a foolhardy and irresponsible direction to take.

One of my greatest concerns is that this bill aims to protect the attributes of religion and sexual orientation simultaneously, and yet often these attributes are in conflict. If this Bill makes it unlawful to refuse a homosexual couple accommodation on the grounds of religious conviction, are you not discriminating against religion (and could then the religious party sue the judge who made the ruling for unfavourable treatment that offends and intimidates?). To make it unlawful to carry out the convictions of one's faith where it does no more than inconvenience or offend another to me is madness – and I see in other countries, particularly Canada and the UK, that this is precisely what this Bill will be used for; not to protect against legitimate discrimination but to arm the petty and the vindictive for revenge.

I believe this Bill to have some positive elements and to have been conceived with an honourable purpose, but any reasonable person can see that in reality all it will become is a great weapon to suppress free speech and intimidate anyone out of anything but a mainstream opinion.

If we have learned *anything* from the past, some serious amendments must be made to make this Bill of any benefit whatsoever to our society.

Regards,
Philippa Boyd