

Media Statement

For Immediate Release

Lesbian group excluded from Victorian Pride Centre

Government funding is not supporting Victorian lesbians

Help Us Fight The New Homophobia

The Lesbian Action Group, a group of lesbians from Melbourne and Central Victoria, applied to hold a lesbian-only event at Victoria's Pride Centre, in order to celebrate International Lesbian Day on 8th of October. They have also applied to the AHRC for an exemption to do so.

'During the 1980s and 1990s,' explains Nicole Mowbray, a founding member of the Lesbian Action Group, 'I was able to go out to any number of lesbian only events in Melbourne and have fun with my lesbian friends. For the past 20 years the lesbian community has had to go underground and meet in private. We applied to book a space at the Pride Centre so we could once again hold an event that lesbians could enjoy.'

Victoria's Pride Centre rejected the booking saying it went against their "diversity and inclusion" policies.

Members of the Lesbian Action Group say that the Victorian Pride Centre is discriminating against lesbians and that public funding is not being directed to the best interests of lesbians. They have asked that the Pride Centre management explain why they are excluding lesbians from the purpose-built LGBTIQ centre. The Pride Centre management has refused their request for a meeting.

Lesbians are a distinct cultural group that should have a right to freedom of association. The Pride Centre is discriminating against lesbians and is breaking several international human rights mandates that the Australian Government is signed up to.

'Lesbians should have a right to assemble in a single-sex space' says Lesbian Action Group spokeswoman, Carole Ann. 'It's about celebrating our lesbian culture in company with our lesbian community as we used to be able to do.'

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Available for interviews by the media.

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