

Statement

The Hon Melissa Horne MP

Minister for Casino, Gaming and Liquor Regulation

Minister for Local Government

Minister for Ports and Freight

Minister for Roads and Road Safety



Thursday, 4 May 2023

STATEMENT FROM THE MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Today, and every day, the Andrews Labor Government is standing with Victoria's LGBTIQ+ community.

It is unacceptable that a council has been forced to cancel an event celebrating the International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia because of threats from fringe groups.

While public debate is fundamental to democracy, there is never room in this state for hate speech, intimidation, or violence.

Yesterday, the Victorian Liberal Party were supported by the Greens on a Non-Government Business Motion to control the services councils can operate – allowing future governments to shut down family-friendly events like Drag Storytime.

We cannot allow the worst of American politics to infiltrate our state.

We have been clear, in Victoria equality is non-negotiable. We have banned the cruel and bigoted practice of conversion therapy, delivered adoption equality and an historic apology for gay convictions in the Victorian Parliament.

But we know the fight to make sure all LGBTIQ+ Victorians are equal, visible, safe and celebrated is far from over.

We will work with Victoria Police to ensure the safety of LGBTIQ+ performers.

We will continue to protect councils' right to program events which celebrate LGBTIQ+ Victorians, increase visibility and uphold our diverse communities' rights, identities and dignity.

And we will continue to work to extend anti-vilification protections beyond race and religion to protect LGBTIQ+ Victorians and other vulnerable members of our community.

To our diverse LGBTIQ+ communities and to every drag performer in the state – you are accepted, supported and loved.

Quote attributable to Minister for Equality Harriet Shing

"We're proud and determined to stand with LGBTIQ+ communities against discrimination and hate and to make sure they are supported, visible, and safe. Pride matters."