



# Gay & Lesbian Rights Lobby Inc

For immediate release

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## **Barnett's call for IVF amendments should be rejected**

Demands by Tasmanian Liberal Senator, Guy Barnett, for the Howard Government to re-introduce legislation banning lesbians and single women from access to IVF and other forms of ART, have been dismissed by the NSW Gay and Lesbian Rights Lobby (GLRL) as homophobic and based on prejudice and fear.

In an article appearing in the Weekend Australian, Senator Barnett stated that the basis for his call for re-introducing legislation that was defeated in the senate in 2000 and 2001, was that he believed "that a child is entitled to come into the world with a reasonable expectation of the love and affection of both a mother and a father".

According to Julie McConnell, co-convenor, "There is no basis upon which the Federal Government should legislate to prevent lesbians from accessing IVF and other forms of ART. Barnett's call must be rejected as it clearly based on a lack of tolerance and understanding of the processes involved in parenting".

David Scamell, co-convenor, added "Barnett's comments directly contradict all credible social research into lesbian and gay families, which shows that a parent's sexuality has no bearing on the development of their child."

In 2002 the NSW Gay and Lesbian Rights Lobby released *Meet the Parents*, a report prepared by University of Sydney legal academic, Jenni Millbank. The findings of the report showed that it is family processes and not family structures that are determinative of a child's well being.