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[Festivals](#)
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Campaign to stop hate speech receives government support in Queensland

September 19, 2017 - News



Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex (LGBTI) Queenslanders welcome today's announcement that the LGBTI Legal Service will receive funding from the Queensland Government to run a campaign against homophobic hate speech in the lead up to the postal vote.

"Homophobic hate speech is unlawful under Queensland's anti-vilification laws," said Matilda Alexander, President of the LGBTI Legal Service. "There are many legal cases confirming that freedom of speech does not include the freedom to incite hatred or ridicule of others because of their sexuality and gender identity. Our community will be stronger and healthier if everyone knows there are limits on spreading hate and ways of enforcing these laws."

In order to ensure accountability for unlawful acts, the LGBTI Legal Service is coordinating a campaign to address hate speech in the lead up to the divisive and unnecessary postal vote on Marriage Equality, called *LIKE LOVE*.

Since the announcement of the postal vote, the service has seen a stark increase in unlawful hate speech online, in public, in the media and on posters. A clear example is the posters placed in Brisbane by a group known as Alt Right which claim that gay marriage is child abuse. Funding for the *LIKE LOVE* campaign will allow the LGBTI Legal Service to ensure accountability for such unlawful acts of hate speech.

The *LIKE LOVE* campaign has a clear message to all Queenslanders:

Vilification is a public act or statement that incites others to hate a person or their group because of their gender identity or sexuality. A public act includes publication on the internet. Vilification is UNLAWFUL in Queensland. If you live in Queensland and see or hear a publication, online post or comment that incites hatred on the basis of gender identity or sexuality, please record or capture the hate speech (including the date and time) and seek legal advice.

For more information about the LGBTI Legal Service, visit: www.lgbtilegalservice.org for details.

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