

# Coast One Nation MP wants state government to fund 'No' case



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by Bill Hoffman

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The marriage debate is about nothing more or less than whether fellow human beings can be allowed equality, says Bill Hoffman.

JOEL CARRETT

QUEENSLAND Government funding for the LGBTI Legal Service has been described as effectively being support for the "Yes" campaign in the national debate on marriage equality, with One Nation state leader Steve Dickson calling for a similar allocation to the "No" campaign.

Mr Dickson, the Member for Buderim, said it was one-sided for the Palaszczuk Government to provide \$7000 to the legal service "just as the postal ballot papers are being mailed to households around Australia.

He said the government would be seen as the most divisive regime ever in Queensland if similar funding wasn't offered to the "No" campaign.

"It was the 'yes' campaigners who complained that the postal survey would split the nation, yet by announcing funding to only one side of the debate, it is the Premier, who is helping to confirm that perception."

LGBTI Legal Service president Matilda Alexander said the money was funding education and awareness of what constituted hate speech.

Ms Alexander said the program explained what was and wasn't legal to say in relation to hate speech laws and if legal options existed.

"It's not about the "Yes" or "No" vote," she said. "One Nation has completely misunderstood the purpose of the funding.

"We've had queries from both sides of that debate about whether a complaint could be brought."

Ms Alexander said it was a relevant topic for people to understand what is legal.

Mr Dickson said the government had for nearly three years shown it was not interested in anything apart from left-wing ideology, social engineering and remaining in power.

"Governments need to be even-handed," he said.

"If the Premier can find funding for the LGBTI legal service, which will undoubtedly use it to campaign for a 'yes' vote in the survey, they must, out of fairness also put similar funding towards the 'no' vote.

"I look forward to the Premier making an announcement on funding for the 'no' campaign in Queensland."

The Premier has been contacted for comment.



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