

Dr. Catherine Day,

Brendan Kelleher,

Chairperson,

[REDACTED]

Citizens' Assembly on Gender Equality,

[REDACTED]

16 Parnell Square,

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03/03/ 2019

Re: Citizens' Assembly relating to Gender Equality

Dear Chairperson,

My submission relates solely to the role of gender definition, per se, as an agent of inequality between the sexes, male and female and, in particular the attempts to use alleged inequality as a basis for gender manipulation affecting children.

I note in that regard, your decision to substantially, and it seems unilaterally, modify the scope of Oireachtas Resolution limiting the Assembly's consideration of the subject to "girls and boys, women and men" and to instead "refer to any or all options in terms of gender identity". No reason was advanced for the change in the Assembly's website. Is this not an example of 'moving the goalposts' such as to fail to abide by the specific mandate of the Oireachtas Resolution? As a consequence, does it not invalidate the Assembly deliberations ab initio?

Could I suggest that at this late stage independent legal advice be sought as to probity of the change, and its consequences for the Assembly's consideration of the Resolution? And could I further suggest that such opinion, if sought, be published on the Assembly's website.

In compiling my submission, I already feel that this tampering with the governing Resolution implies an early bias towards one side of the gender debate – a bias that was also shown in the review of the Gender Recognition Act in 2019 when the responsible Minister, Regina Doherty, chose the head of one of the gender identity advocacy groups to chair the review and assured her, in advance, as reported in the press, that whatever conclusions the review group recommended would have her full support! Further bias was evident in the constitution of the Review Group's membership and in the public submissions made to the Group

My submission relates to the first paragraph of the Oireachtas Resolution i.e. that relating to 'gender norms'. My specific concern is for children who would appear to be the object of this and relates to attempts to abandon conventional, long-established, and accepted, natural sex/ gender attributes from birth and replace them with indeterminate sexual identities not based on biology. Any

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discourse by the Assembly on this sub-topic is likely to be influenced by the weight given to 'nature' vs 'nurture' if gender identity prevails over biological gender.

Could I suggest that the Assembly be guided to consider the following background context on gender identity?

1. The existence of abundant literature on gender equality that demonstrates the deeply contested field where the science of biology is pitted against the more recent ascent of a non-biological alternative that purports to replace 'nature' by 'nurture' as the defining paradigm of gender. Cambridge University Press's website is but one that demonstrates the gulf between the contesting parties (refer headings such as gender identity, gender studies etc., to see the extent of published material).
2. Portrayed as a battle between science and ideology, Gender Identity has been aided by the arrival on university campuses of Departments of Gender Studies, the appointment of Gender Officers, and the installation of infrastructure and policies that have consolidated the new ideology. Not without controversy, however, as academics have railed against the accompanying restrictions this has placed on long-standing academic freedom of expression and on individual human rights – in some cases attaining ludicrous notoriety such have been the extremities of the new ideology's aspirations (reference the case of Dr. Jordan Peterson, Professor of Psychology, University of Toronto who famously took issue with his Alma Mater's diktat that he address students under their gender friendly, but illogical pronouns). As a consequence University Rectors and Presidents have had to pull back from the populist wave of gender innovations on their campuses.
3. Division within the Psychological profession as to the validity and impact of gender identity claims and gender manipulation actions is widespread as the profession has come under pressure to support a populist ideology. Again the irrepressible Dr. Peterson has coolly, and clinically, explained the inherent falsities of the new dogma.
4. I suggest ideology has replaced science in this country and I offer as evidence the public submissions made to the 2018/19 review of the 2015 Gender Recognition Act . I read all of the on-line submissions made – and found it a particularly salutary and depressing process – as close to 100% of them parroted pretty much the same content (in some cases identical, signalling an organised effort to quantitatively overwhelm the review group). They came from a very broad cross-section of Irish society represented by advocacy groups, political parties, trades unions, academic, teaching and student organisations, sporting groups and clubs, with relatively few individual submissions. As depressing were the extraordinary lengths to which the concerted demands of the submissions went. Deferment of gender/sex definition on birth certificates, reduction in the age threshold for gender self-identification to include children, passport modification to include gender 'identities' other than male/female - and inclusive of the current range of well-known identities defined by the LGBT+ movement, plus - as suggested by the " + " sign - any prospective additional variant that may arise in future; provision for medical and psychological supports to those wishing to self-identify (and in cases of children, at their custodians/parents request); and removal of any independent medical assessment of those children seeking gender re-assignment. In endorsing these radical changes in its report and conclusions of 2019 to facilitate the introduction of un-

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fettered transition by children, including very young children, the former Minister and Review Group, have invited potentially devastating psychological, and other medical, interventions that would, in any reasonable circumstances, constitute nothing short of child abuse.

This latest fantasy survived the review process and the former Minister's "truly representative" review board under its "external chair" and while current political stalemate will probably result in interim postponement of legislative enactment, could I suggest that this should not prevent the current Assembly offering an opinion as to the appropriateness of such measures due to their potentially adverse consequences for children? (see my later references on the topic). A broader-based examination of what can be only classed as an ideological founded attempt by adults, who should know better, to drastically tinker with the sex/gender of vulnerable children, is warranted; and one that gives due weight to significant medical advice to the contrary. Radical alteration of their sexual status at an age when children are incapable (mentally and physically) of understanding the full consequences of same constitutes an abuse of the human rights of those children.

In conclusion, it seems to me that the concepts enunciated by the International Declaration on Human Rights, namely the entitlement not to be discriminated on grounds of race, colour, religious or political beliefs, sex or ethnicity - relatively clear and definable parameters - are in the process of being supplanted by the amorphous and concept of 'Equality'. Legislating for something that is inherently flawed in conception does not make it right. It usually creates other inequalities that society has to bear.

Equality, or the perceived lack of it, played a major role in convincing the Irish electorate to radically alter the long-standing status quo in two seismic referenda. In doing so, it left a substantial proportion of that same electorate feeling dis-enfranchised and confounded at not alone the abandonment of rights previously held dear by them and the Constitution but more so by what appeared to be their total perversion i.e. 'same-sex marriage' as an equivalent of heterosexual marriage, abortion (effectively on demand) of a foetus equivalent to birth of the same (right to choose). 'Equality' in these cases was biologically impossible and logically absurd. The referenda outcomes also entailed a significant majority thrashing a substantial minority's dearly held moral views about sanctity and probity of the two of the most important common goods in Irish society.

Gender Equality has produced more gender difference than ever before between the sexes. It has undermined the male/female paradigm which has defined gender for countless generations and peoples from all regions of the Earth. Gender Equality has originated a new paradigm re-classifying the hitherto normative male/female definition of human sexuality as just one (i.e. so called 'binary') of a more expansive suite of possible gender identities that purport to have equal status to it. Gender meaning sex has become gender meaning identity; and as gender identity has, in the process, severed its roots from normative sex, and the biology that underpins it, ideology has replaced science as the foundation of human sexual identity. The new language of gender uses these differences to claim a right to parity of esteem that is illogical and false, resulting in an understandable clash between science/biology and ideology/gender identity. Allegations of discrimination, the touchstone of the two referenda, have surfaced again as gender identitists substitute ideology for logic in a battle to prevail (even though contrary arguments can equally be made). This alleged discrimination feeds back into Equality and so the wheel has turned a full circle.

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‘Gender Equality’ approximates an oxymoron (a phrase combining two ideas of opposite meaning) – a not unusual linguistic device that was also successively employed in both referenda - and to advance it, the Oireachtas Resolution, has directed the Assembly to “challenge the remaining barriers and social norms and social attitudes that facilitate discrimination towards girls and boys, women and men”. Will this extend to the inequality encountered and discrimination suffered by children of homeless families, of refugees, of our travellers, or of children suffering from life-threatening illnesses? Or are we talking instead of yet more social engineering to fulfil some ideological paradigm of little consequence that will cause more harm than good?

I wish the Assembly well in its deliberations and pray that justice will prevail.

Yours Sincerely,

Brendan Kelleher.

#### NOTES.

1. Ms. Monnine Griffith, Chief Executive, BeLonG To Youth Services – a gender identity advocacy group – was appointed by then Minister, Regina Doherty, to chair the Review Group. The Minister’s fulsome welcome to Ms. Griffith and advance commitment to conclusions in their report was widely reported in the media at the time. A letter of complaint I wrote to the Taoiseach about the inherent bias in the selection of Chairperson was acknowledged by him and passed on to the Minister for a response. She did so, informing me that the composition of the review group would be such as to adequately represent a sufficient diversity of opinion.
2. As an indicator of the published opposing views on the contested topic of gender/sex in the determination of ‘identity’ I recommend Cambridge University Press’s website.
3. Universities in the U.S. and U.K., and much more recently in Ireland, have become wary of taking sides in the gender identity battle as defence of the fundamental ethos of freedom of expression - and the threat of legal action to defend it - has turned the tide of ideological intolerance hitherto prevailing in these hallowed halls of academe. These battles have been reported in the press from time to time
4. The eminent, and laconic, Canadian clinical psychologist and Professor of Psychology at Toronto University, Dr. Jordan Pederson, became the object of much attention when he contested the proposed enactment of Federal Legislation that proposed to include “gender identity” and “gender expression” on the list of prohibited grounds for discrimination (and furthermore, a law to punish those who failed to use “preferred pronouns” in addressing those of unorthodox gender identity). Even his university weighed in and threatened him with dismissal unless he complied with this convention during the course of his academic duties. This bizarre situation, and his erudite and dismissive response is described, on his website (under the title “On the Psychological and Social issue of Identity”). The article’s focus on his concerns about the adverse consequences for children and adolescents of the proposed legislation should be, I suggest, provide serious food for thought to the

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deliberations of this Assembly . On-line, U Tube videos, articles and debates characterise Peterson's formidable role in this particular topic area.

5. Recently, divisions have emerged in some UK second level schools as parents of ethnic minorities have protested the teaching of Government approved, gender biased instruction to pupils (refer British Press, notably, the Guardian).