



**ATTORNEY-GENERAL  
HON ROBERT McCLELLAND MP  
AND  
MINISTER FOR FINANCE AND DEREGULATION  
HON LINDSAY TANNER MP**

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**MEDIA RELEASE**

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21 April 2010

**REFORM OF ANTI-DISCRIMINATION LEGISLATION**

Attorney-General, Robert McClelland and Minister for Finance and Deregulation, Lindsay Tanner today announced the Government's intention to streamline federal anti-discrimination legislation into one single comprehensive law.

Currently, Commonwealth anti-discrimination legislation is located in four separate and distinct laws: the *Racial Discrimination Act 1975*, the *Sex Discrimination Act 1984*, the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*, and the *Age Discrimination Act 2004*.

A single Act will address current inconsistencies and make the system more user-friendly by clarifying relevant rights and obligations. It will also provide the opportunity to review the complaints handling process and the related role and functions of the Australian Human Rights Commission. Importantly, there will be no diminution of existing protections currently available at the federal level.

“Effective anti-discrimination legislation is an important element in removing barriers to greater inclusion and participation in society. Anti-discrimination law should be clear and easy to understand because people shouldn't need expensive legal advice to know their rights and obligations,” Mr McClelland said

The project, to be delivered through a Better Regulation Ministerial Partnership, will also provide the basis for the development of harmonised State and Territory anti-discrimination laws which is currently being progressed through the Standing Committee of Attorneys-General (SCAG).

“Better Regulation Ministerial Partnerships form a key part of the Government's deregulation agenda and ensure a disciplined and coordinated approach to delivering regulatory reform across government.

“Consolidating all Commonwealth anti-discrimination legislation into one Act will reduce the regulatory burden and drive greater efficiencies and improved productivity outcomes by reducing compliance costs for individuals and business, particularly small business,” Mr Tanner said.

The Government intends to develop exposure draft legislation as the basis for consultation with stakeholders and the public.

A single Act dealing with all federal anti-discrimination laws represents an important part of the Australian Human Rights Framework and will create a more effective system by ensuring adequate protections from unlawful discrimination.

**Media Contact:** Adam Siddique (McClelland) 0407 473 630  
Nardia Dazkiw (Tanner) 0418 144 690

Parliament House, Canberra ACT 2600 • Telephone (02) 6277 7300 • Fax (02) 6273 4102