

Written evidence submitted by a member of the public (GRA0060)

I'd like to remain anonymous because this is a sensitive subject and many people do not understand the threats to women's rights. Many otherwise decent people are quick to cancel, doxx and silence women who try to speak up on legislation which affects them because they've been convinced that these women are bigots. I'd like to minimise any risk to my employment there may be for voicing my concerns.

I'm a 37 year old woman taking this opportunity to ask that you consider the following points because I fear that my rights to single sex (and lesbian only) provisions and spaces are under threat by potential reforms to the GRA 2004. I'm single, I work as a software engineer and I live alone and have no children. I'm a lesbian and I'm a survivor of sexual abuse and exploitation.

My main argument is that it should not be easy to obtain a GRC because it will be exploited by people regardless of how they identify, and this exploitation threatens the safety, freedom and livelihood of women and girls.

Should the governments proposed changes make the process kinder and more straight forward?

1. It's important to consider definitions and intentions. *Why* should the process be kind and straight forward? Are we deliberately kind and straight forward to people applying for unemployment or disability benefits?
2. Transgenderism is not the same as homosexuality. Do not confuse the two. What separates transgender people from the rest of society is that they have decided they would rather identify as the opposite sex for any number of reasons. This is a decision they have made. There is no evidence they are born this way.
3. Since transgender people are the same as the rest of society, why do we need to be any more *kind* in this legislation than we are to others in any other legislation? It's not a rhetorical question, there must be a reason for this. Please think about it if it's not obvious.
4. What are good legal reasons for the law to recognise men as women or women as men? Are there any? If there are, who benefits? Who loses out? Let's make legislation with practical purpose not nice, but ill thought out ideas.
5. Consider same sex spaces. It should not be easy for any male to legally access female only spaces, awards, sports, short lists, prisons, hospital wards, refuges and rape crisis centres. A male does not become, statistically, any more or less likely to harm women just because he identifies as a woman. He will retain the same risk for male pattern violence. He'll also retain his physical and social advantage. He does not become equal to a biological female simply by living as a woman, even with hormones and surgery.
6. Consider crime, employment, health and other statistics. If many males are suddenly, easily legally able to be counted as females, we lose any meaningful data on the sex

differences in society. The reality of these differences, though, will continue, and maybe even grow, but we won't be able to count, trace, analyse, predict, or regulate these differences to make the lives of women comparable to those of men because men identifying as women will skew the stats. Let's not make it easy for people to opt in an out of male/female statistics. This should apply to a carefully selected few (or to no one) but not to just any casually self-identified numbers of people, who may be larger in number than you anticipate if you lower the bar.

7. **Should there be changes to the requirements for individuals to have lived in their acquired gender for two years?**
8. If you're not willing to live as the opposite sex without a GRC for two years then you're not really committed are you? You shouldn't just be able to wake up one day and decide to legally change your sex by filling out a few forms online. If this were allowed, you could change your legal sex, then carry on living as the sex you really are. You've then effectively created a fake id that is legal and accepted everywhere. In fact, your fake id becomes more real than your physical existence in the eyes of the law. All your tracked movements will belong to this fake persona – like a fake account on social media, but for real life, and your movements as your real self are untraceable because all your documentation says you're someone else. We should be mindful of the potential for exploitation.
9. **Why is the number of people applying for GRCs so low compared to the number of people identifying as transgender?**
10. Consider the difference between transgender and transsexual. Transsexuals actually want to be the opposite sex. These are the people who undergo surgery. Transgender is different. It's a label that encompasses any reason for adopting clothing or stereotypes of the opposite sex. It includes transsexuals. This is likely the reason why most transgender people don't apply for a GRC. Because being transgender is not necessarily something they consider essential to their physical being. It's not a sexual orientation that they're born with, it's something else, and that something varies per individual but it could be any of the following: an identity (a cultural trend, like hipster), a costume, a fetish, an escape, an obsession, a delusion, or even a self diagnosis which holds as much weight as any other medical self diagnosis. **This is why we should not lower the age limit to apply for a GRC.**
11. **Should the requirement for a diagnosis of gender dysphoria be removed?**
If we remove the need for a medical diagnosis, it means you don't even have to be trans to change your legal sex. What you're then saying is: your legal sex, the data and the laws relating to it, are something you, me, and anyone can choose for themselves, for any reason, even just because you feel like it, or because you gain something from it, for example some random bloke who likes watching women in changing rooms and showers, or intimidating women who are enjoying a safe space because he enjoys the power of frightening people. It doesn't mean women get treated and differently though, because we're treated that way based on the reality of our obvious physical sex, regardless of our legal sex.

12. Not requiring a GD diagnosis also means that heterosexual men get to legally call themselves lesbians, without any gender dysphoria, without even dressing as women, which is something men have been doing informally for decades – telling lesbians they're lesbians trapped in a man's body to pressure them into sex.
13. If any men can legally refer to themselves as females attracted to females, then actual lesbians (biological females attracted to other biological females) not only have to put up with men having a right to be in their lesbian spaces, but they also get accused of transphobia when they say they're not attracted to these men – which is something they cannot help, because lesbians aren't attracted to men. Google 'cotton ceiling' if you're not familiar with this concept.

October 2020