



# JOINT PRESS RELEASE

**SENATOR THE HON GEORGE BRANDIS QC  
ATTORNEY-GENERAL**

**SENATOR THE HON SCOTT RYAN  
SPECIAL MINISTER OF STATE**

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## **PLEBISCITE PAVES WAY FOR CHOICE ON SAME SEX MARRIAGE**

The Australian people will have their say on whether to legalise same-sex marriage on Saturday, February 11 2017. The Plebiscite, to be run and managed by the Australian Electoral Committee (AEC), will ask voters: “Should the law be changed to allow same-sex couples to marry?”

Voting will be compulsory and the result will be determined by a simple majority of votes (50 per cent + 1 vote).

The Turnbull Government is delivering its election commitment to give the community a say on whether same-sex marriage should be legalised.

If the plebiscite passes, the Parliament will respect the decision of the people and will promptly legislate to amend the *Marriage Act 1961* to enable same-sex couples to marry. This will allow Parliament to legislate in a way that directly reflects community attitudes and gives Australians a greater sense of ownership of the outcome.

The Australian Government has budgeted \$170 million to run the plebiscite.

‘Yes’ and ‘No’ advertising committees will be appointed by the Attorney-General and the Special Minister of State to run the advertising campaigns with each consisting of members of the Government (2), the Opposition (2), Cross-Bench (1) and the public (5). The Government will support the advertising campaigns of the ‘Yes’ and ‘No’ committees with a grant of \$7.5 million to each committee in addition to them being afforded deductible gift recipient status up to a limit of \$1,500.

Consistent with the 1999 Referendum, expenditure will be limited to costs associated with advertising in the four weeks leading up to the poll. Advertising will be submitted to the Service Delivery Coordination Committee of Cabinet for clearance.

Bill Shorten’s Labor Party did not move on same-sex marriage during its six years in Government. We know that a majority of Australians want the opportunity to have their say on same-sex marriage and Bill Shorten must not deny them that chance.

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