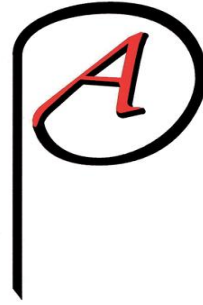


Progressive Atheists Inc.

Est. 10 Jan 2010 Reg: A0054119U Member of AAI

"Your participation is PA's future"



August 2015

... we seek to go beyond divisive racial, religious, tribal, and sectarian constructs, and instead, contribute to a universal humanity.

Headlines

- ★ **Campaign:** International Day Against State Religion - 11 August 2015
- ★ **Campaign:** Same Sex Marriage Debate – Where are we?
- ★ **Report:** End of Life choices
- ★ **Report:** Submissions for Halal food labelling
- ★ **Rally:** March for marriage equality - Melbourne

BackPage

- **Progressive Atheists Inc. Open Meeting:**
- **Melbourne Atheists MeetUp Group:**
- **Membership Renewal Term 2015:** 1 July 2015 – 30 June 2016
- Progressive Atheists Inc. **'Proudly Atheist' T-shirts & Badges**

MEMBERSHIP

Term 2015: 1 July 2015 – 30 June 2016

***** ONLY \$20 Annually *****

Purchase Membership Online:

<http://progressiveatheists.org/product-category/membership/>

CONTACT PROGRESSIVE ATHEISTS INC.

President: president@progressiveatheists.org

Vice President – Andrew: 0438 043 050

Secretary: secretary@progressiveatheists.org

Website: progressiveatheists.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/ProgressiveAtheistsInc

Twitter: twitter.com/ProgAtheistsInc

Progressive Atheist Inc. | Headlines

Campaign:

Recognition of International Day Against State Religion - 11 August 2015

Ghulam Mustafa Lakho, an advocate of the Supreme Court of Pakistan and blogger since 2008 (see his blog spot here : <http://ghulammustafalakho.blogspot.com.au/>) is proposing the INTERNATIONAL DAY AGAINST STATE RELIGION August 11th 2015. It will allow the voices of the secular to be heard in Pakistan. In the words of Ghulam Mustafa Lakho:

"My dear fellow citizens,

As all the non-Muslims as well as non-believers of Pakistan are the HALF CITIZENS; so, they must be FULL CITIZENS at once. The best constitutional, non-violent and peaceful way to win the right of FULL CITIZENSHIP is to DEMAND repeal of the STATE RELIGION from the Constitution of Pakistan. Thus, in solidarity with the HALF CITIZENS of Pakistan, I have the honour to propose "INTERNATIONAL DAY AGAINST STATE RELIGION." Let us fix the 11th day of August as "INTERNATIONAL DAY AGAINST STATE RELIGION." I hope that the foundation of such Day (IDASR) will set individuals and groups in motion to openly express their views against the State Religion of Pakistan. Do you agree? If yes, then, let us urge all the countries of Europe and all the other civilized nations around the world including United Nations to recognize this DAY."

To sign the petition: <https://www.change.org/p/the-secretary-general-united-nations-recognize-the-international-day-against-state-religion-2>

To follow on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/events/463152220499062/>



Campaign:

The 3 ways you can help marriage equality today!!

Cross-party marriage equality legislation will be introduced next week and we need your help to get the votes to achieve reform. There are 3 easy ways you can help today:

1. Support our Television Commercial Campaign

To overcome the scaremongering campaign of opponents of marriage equality, we have created a series of beautiful TV advertisements and we need your help to get them on air to win over the hearts and minds of undecided MPs and Senators.

2. Getting Married? Tell Canberra

We are compiling a list of all the couples that will get married in Australia when we finally have marriage equality. By telling us about your wedding plans and sharing your story you will help win over the hearts and minds of undecided MPs.

3. Complete your MPs Marriage Equality Survey:

Various MPs are polling their electorates on marriage equality, make sure you have completed your MPs survey.

To Have you say and help the cause: <http://us4.campaign-archive2.com/?u=f7c063e4b1dd0564db9b0d253&id=c4ab8579a2&e=bb7aafd443>



Report:

End of Life Choices

Submission to the Parliament of Victoria Inquiry into End of Life Choices July 2015 In Support of Legalising Euthanasia in Victoria

We are the Progressive Atheists (Inc.) – a group of activist working for social justice. The aim of this brief submission is to express our support for legalising euthanasia. By expressing such support, we do not intend to belittle the moral gravity of the matter of euthanasia (or suicide or any voluntary or involuntary ending of life), but rather, we intend to support the right of informed and consenting individuals to end their lives, at a time of their own choosing.

We acknowledge that this task is immense, in that on the one hand, we want people to choose their own time of death, but on the other hand, we do not want the criteria to be so broad as to institute State subsidised suicide. But we believe that in cases where the people are elderly, and/or in severe irreversible pain, and/or facing potential indignity, clearly, the autonomy of the patient must prevail. Now in saying so, we acknowledge that there is the ironic danger that people may be tempted or pressured into dying, by the institutions, persons and/or families that surround them, who may stand to benefit from their demise.

By saying so, we are merely highlighting the possibility, against which we must guard ourselves. We acknowledge that the freechoice to die has profound impacts, both physical and emotional, on the family, friends and colleagues. We also acknowledge that people (both the one wanting to die and the ones for whom that death is of concern) may have ambivalent feelings, which would need time to be processed. But we also realise that the wish to die, once implemented, is irreversible, and therefore, we do not believe that the process of obtaining euthanasia should be excessively short, and we request that psychological support services be made available to aid decision making.

However, in the end, we believe that neither the family nor any other person or institution involved, ought to have the choice of overruling the free choice of the individual. Consequently, the mediatory process would need to be complex and nuanced.

A detailed articulation of such a process is beyond our current capacity, and therefore, we will leave that to the relevant professionals to articulate further. We acknowledge that the delivery of the medical procedure of euthanasia will involve persons other than the one wishing to die. As we have agreed that the matter pertains to the taking of a life, we believe that no medical practitioner or any other person assisting in the process should be compelled to implement the euthanasia.

But on balance, we believe that there will be an adequate number of persons willing to implement euthanasia. In conclusion: We believe that in a secular society such as ours, public policy should not be made on the basis of religion alone, but on the basis of rationality, through publicly accountable processes. Therefore, we are delighted to see this Parliamentary Committee in action. We thank you, Honourable Members of Parliament, for attending to this matter diligently, and we wish you all the best. We are hoping that euthanasia will be legalised in Victoria soon.



<http://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/compassion--choices-applauds-governor-for-signing-right-to-know-act-improvements-277277651.html>

Campaign:

Submissions for Halal food labelling

Halal certification and food labelling is in the news at the moment. For those who are not familiar with the definitions, halal simply means permitted or lawful. So when we are talking about halal foods it means any foods that are allowed to be eaten according to Islamic Sharia law.

This means that for any food to be considered halal it must comply with the religious ritual and observance of Sharia law.

TRIGGER: description of animal slaughter:

Here at Halal Choices we are concerned with the halal slaughter of animals such as beef, lamb and poultry. To be halal certified the animal must be facing Mecca, have its throat cut while still alive and then ritually sacrificed by a Muslim who recites a prayer dedicating the slaughter to Allah. Because the animals must be slaughtered alive, stun guns are often not an option as they can kill an animal before the heart pumps out all the blood.

Slaughtering facilities need to be inspected to ensure halal standards are met. Fees must be paid to one of the certifying organisations for this service. Islamic certifying organisations benefit financially from providing this service. They receive a constant stream of funds to support Islamic projects which contribute to the advancement of sharia (Islamic law) here and around the world.

Many companies are freely paying this tax but not displaying the corresponding symbol on their labels. Currently Muslims represent less than two percent of the Australian population. So, as an Australian consumer, you could be paying a fee for an Islamic ritual service you do not require. (http://www.halalchoices.com.au/what_is_halal.html)

Many have made submissions to the Australian parliament recently voicing their opinions on halal slaughter, labelling and tax. If you would like to view these submissions:

http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Economics/Food_Cert_Schemes/Submissions

Parliamentary submissions have now closed, but if you would like to write to your own member: http://www.halalchoices.com.au/take_action.html

To read what Denmark have done:

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/denmark-bans-halal-and-kosher-slaughter-as-minister-says-animal-rights-come-before-religion-9135580.html>

Rally:

**FIVE REASONS TO MARCH FOR MARRIAGE EQUALITY ON SAT 15
AUG:**

1. Eleven years of discrimination is too many; marriage is a civil right.
2. The US and Ireland have joined another 19 countries to have extended marriage rights to all; Australia lags behind.
3. Politicians must be pressured to support public sentiment and vote "yes" to the Private Members Bill for marriage equality this August.
4. Send a strong message to Abbott: stop standing in the way of equality.
5. Show anti-LGBTI groups that public opinion favours equality over discrimination.

1PM, SATURDAY 15 AUGUST, VICTORIAN STATE LIBRARY

STAY TUNED FOR SPEAKERS TO BE ANNOUNCED.

The Progressive Atheists' organisation and some of its members are actively involved in global campaigns to help and free the victims.

There is a lot more that we can do but we need your help.

Want to assist with this campaign? Email Progressive Atheists at campaigns@progressiveatheists.org

To make a donation for a banner to be used outside the Saudi Embassy, please donate on the Progressive Atheists website:

<http://progressiveatheists.org/products/donations/raif-badawi-campaign/>

Progressive Atheists Inc.

Est. 10 Jan 2010 Reg: A0054119U Member of AAI

Progressive Atheists Inc. Open Meeting

Progressive Atheists Inc. Open Meeting | 22nd August 2015

Our next Progressive Atheists Inc. Open Meeting will be held on Saturday 22nd August 2015, 12 pm – 4 pm for lunch and discussion at Clover & Rye Café: 410 Bridge Road, Richmond, VIC. All who support our purpose are welcome.

Progressive Atheists Purpose Statement:

<http://progressiveatheists.org/about-us/purpose-statement/>

Melbourne Atheists MeetUp Group | Event Calendar

Keep in touch with atheists around Melbourne via the Melbourne MeetUp:

<http://www.meetup.com/Melbourne-Atheists/events/calendar/>

Membership Term 2015 | 1 July 2015 – 30 June 2016

Progressive Atheists Membership is \$20 per annum / \$10 concession.

JOIN US | Purchase New Membership Online:

<http://progressiveatheists.org/about-us/membership/application/>

For other methods to renew and join please see our website:

<http://progressiveatheists.org/about-us/membership/>

Email our Membership Officer:

membership@progressiveatheists.org

OR ASK the person who gave you this bulletin

Progressive Atheists Inc. 'Proudly Atheist' T-shirts & Badges

T-shirts ONLY \$15 for members!

Badges \$2.50 each ~ 2 designs / 3 colours

Order your t-shirt or badge on our website:

<http://progressiveatheists.org/products-for-sale/>

Sales Rep. Elida Radig: sales@progressiveatheists.org.