

A Timeline of Women's Rights in Australia

Aussie women fought for our rights to safer spaces and for greater visibility and participation in public life over many years. So why, in 2024, are we being told we must tolerate the erasure of female-only spaces in NSW because of the "Equality Bill?"

1820

FEMALE HEALTHCARE

There have been women's hospitals and wards since the 1820s to protect the safety, privacy and dignity of women and girls.

1900s

SPORTS

Australian women have fought for decades to dismantle the many historic barriers preventing our participation in sports. Until the early 1900s women were not permitted to swim in the presence of men, which restricted our access to public pools and beaches and stopped women from competitive swimming.

1909

FEMALE-ONLY PRISONS

The first female prison in NSW opened in Long Bay in 1909. NSW is already permitting trans identified men to be housed in the female prison estate and the Equality Bill will only exacerbate this human rights abuse.

1910

PUBLIC TOILETS

For 30 years, public toilets in Sydney were strictly male-only. Sydney's first purpose-built public lavatories for women were constructed in Hyde Park in 1910.

1970s

PUBLIC ACCEPTANCE AND SAFE SPACES FOR LESBIANS

Sydney lesbians began to have dedicated social spaces in the 1970s, where they could meet in safety, free from harassment, and to meet friends and lovers.

1971

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND RAPE CRISIS CENTRES

Sydney Rape Crisis Centre was the first to be established in Australia and was the result of a two-day meeting of women in Redfern Town Hall in 1971.

#ThisIsNotEquality

Men have never belonged in any of these spaces, but Alex Greenwich's "Equality Bill" will bring in Sex Self ID – an administrative process that will allow any man to quickly and easily change his legal sex to female and have access to ALL women and girls' spaces.

Sex Self ID laws have been a disaster in the UK, Ireland, Europe and North America. The women of NSW have not been consulted and we say NO to this regressive Bill that sets women back centuries!