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Your ref:

MEDIA STATEMENT

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2021 - Statement on Afghanistan

Pride in Law is a national non-political LGBTIQ+ Law Association, aimed at connecting lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer, and questioning (LGBTIQ+) members of the legal community and their allies. Pride in Law is Australia's first and only National LGBTIQ+ Law Association, which is '*Law Focused, Pride Inspired*'.

Since July 2017, Pride in Law has worked to provide visibility, education, and advocacy around LGBTIQ+ issues in the legal profession. We represent and promote legal professionals, increase community understanding of the law, particularly as it affects LGBTIQ+ individuals, help protect the rights of individuals and advise the community about the benefits legal professionals can provide.

Pride in Law join members of the international legal community in expressing grave concern regarding the fall of Afghanistan's Government to the Taliban.

Pride in Law is deeply concerned about the unfolding situation in Afghanistan, in particular, the threat to fundamental individual human rights posed by the resurgence of Taliban control. The expected re-imposition of a fundamentalist interpretation of *Sharia* law across Afghanistan will undo much of the human rights advances made since 2001 and have potentially devastating consequences for Afghan women and girls, as well as the LGBTIQ+ community, and other ethnic and religious minorities.

Under the Taliban's fundamentalist interpretation of *Sharia* law, both men and women from the LGBTIQ+ community face persecution and severe penalties if they are found to have engaged in same-sex sexual activity, including the death penalty. The Taliban's recent comments suggest that people from the rainbow community will face death by stoning or crushing under Taliban rule are particularly distressing.

Pride in Law calls for both the transitional and permanent Afghan Government to protect the fundamental individual human rights of all Afghans, including the LGBTIQ+ community, women and girls, and other at-risk groups.

Pride in Law also calls on the Australian Government to adhere to its international human rights obligations in offering protection visas to those Afghans in fear of death or persecution. It is imperative the Australian Government continue in its efforts to support at-risk people that remain in Afghanistan, including providing to individuals and organisations to help LGBTIQ+ displaced persons to reach safety. Further, Pride in Law joins other international human rights organisations in calling for investigations into the targeted murders of people in Afghanistan from minority groups, including LGBTIQ+ people, as well as women and girls.

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