

MEDIA RELEASE**15 March 2016****For immediate release****Deaf Juror Case Goes to Canberra**

Application for Special Leave to Appeal to the High Court for Ms Gaye Lyons' case against State of Queensland has been successful.

Ms. Lyons alleges that she has been discriminated by State of Queensland by the refusal to provide her with an Auslan interpreter so that she can perform her civic duty as a juror. She continues to challenge the Queensland Court of Appeal's decision that there was no discrimination by that conduct.

Justice Susan Mary Kiefel AC, and Justice Geoffrey Nettle who presided the proceeding asked the Solicitor General of Queensland, Mr Dunning QC, who represents the State of Queensland if Ms Lyons would be able to perform the role of a juror effectively if an Auslan interpreter was provided, the Solicitor-General replied with a 'Yes'.

Barristers Ms. Kylie Nomchong SC and Mr. Ben Fogarty who represented Ms Lyons, believed this is a case of human rights obligations not being met and a clear breach of the discrimination legislation.

'This is of critical importance to Ms Lyons who is deaf and wants to actively participate in our community by being able to be considered for jury service' says Ms Nomchong, 'however, it clearly has wider ramificationsto apply to all persons with disabilities'.

'It is not about me', says Ms Lyons, 'it is the principle of justice and equality for every citizen of Australia and deaf people should not be treated any differently'.

Mr Kyle Miers, Chief Executive of Deaf Australia, who attended the hearing said it is a significant step forward in recognising that deaf people can do anything, but we're only one step away from removing that discrimination in Queensland and may have wider implication to all states and territories that currently practice in excluding deaf people from doing their civic duties.

Ms Lyons' case will be heard in Australian High Court in Canberra.



Photo supplied by Kyle Miers

From left to right: Mark Patrick (DDLS NSW), Kyle Miers (CEO Deaf Australia), Ben Fogarty (Barrister), Ms Gaye Lyon, Ms. Kylie Nomchong (Barrister), Kathryn O'Brien (Porta Lawyers).

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