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## John Pesutto throws support behind Liberal MP Moira Deeming after emails expose her extremist views

Liberal leader John Pesutto is backing Moira Deeming after she was slammed for her “shameful” views on abortion, the trans community and the Safe Schools program.

[Mitch Clarke](#) and [Holly Hales](#) 6 min read February 23, 2023 - 4:51PM [293 comments](#)

Sky News host James Macpherson says Victorian Premier Daniel Andrews' comments on state Opposition leader John Pesutto needing a little box to stand on in parliament is the first time he's “almost been funny”. Mr Macpherson's comments came after it was announced that Mr Andrews commented on Mr Pesutto in...

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Opposition Leader John Pesutto has thrown his support behind controversial Liberal MP Moira Deeming, declaring she will remain a member of the party.

Mr Pesutto on Thursday confirmed he didn't support Ms Deeming's quest to hold an inquiry into transition practices in Victoria.

He also said he had no plans to make changes to the state's abortion or gay conversion therapy laws.

But he refused to condemn Ms Deeming's views on abortion, the transgender community and Victoria's Safe Schools program which were outlined in a series of explosive emails obtained through Freedom of Information.

"I don't agree with those views ... I'm progressive, I'm modern, I'm inclusive, I love everybody and want everybody to have opportunities in our great state," Mr Pesutto said.

"I say this to every Victorian, the Liberal Party I lead is one that wants to be a voice for everyone.



John Pesutto refused to condemn Moira Deeming's views. Picture: David Crosling

"I strongly support the LGBTI community. I was proud to march at the Pride March recently."

Mr Pesutto said Ms Deeming would continue in her role as an upper house MP, but wouldn't "engage in hypotheticals" about whether he would preselect her if he had been given the chance prior to the election.

“Moira was preselected by the Liberal Party last year. She’s a member of our team and she’ll go forward as a member of our team,” he said.

“I’ve had some good discussions with her and I think she understands the importance of us working as a team, and I look forward to having further discussions in the future.”

## Dan blasts ‘shameful’ trans comments

Daniel Andrews has used a fiery Question Time to lash Moira Deeming’s “shameful” views on abortion, the trans community and Victoria’s Safe Schools program.

In an impassioned ministerial statement to end the last Question Time of the week, the Premier also attacked opposition leader John Pesutto for failing to address the new Liberal MPs comments.

“I’m standing up to make these matters clear, one wonders when someone else might do the same,” Mr Andrews said in the blistering attack.

“I’m saddened to have to do this, but it is important to provide clarity when it comes to a number of very important matters.”



Premier Daniel Andrews criticised Moira Deeming’s ‘shameful’ views. Picture: Valeriu Campau

Emails from Ms Deeming were on Thursday unearthed through Freedom of Information documents, exposing extremist views on sex workers and the transgender community.

In the explosive emails sent between 2020 and 2022, Ms Deeming shared her intent to change abortion laws in Victoria and expressed a fervent opposition to the LGQBQTQ+ + + community, in particular the transgender rights movement.

Mr Andrews said the Victorian government had a clear record in supporting the trans community.

“We will not use the trans community as a political weapon shamefully as others continue to do in this precinct, in the other place (upper house) this week,” he said.

“We will support the trans community in any way that we possibly can, and that is fundamentally a recognition that the trans community are 15 times more likely to self harm.”

As a former high school teacher, Ms Deeming also critiqued the education sector in Victoria – particularly the Safe Schools program – since her win at last year’s state election.

Mr Andrews said it is “shameful to think that some elected to this parliament continue to trot out lies and absolute misinformation” about the program.

“Safe schools save lives and any bullying, no matter what the motivation, we want to make sure that our teachers are properly equipped to protect their students,” he said.

Mr Pesutto will hold a press conference at 3.15pm.

## **‘I won because God arranged it’**

Emails from a Victorian Liberal MP have been unearthed, exposing extremist views on sex workers and the transgender community.

Sex Work Law Reform Victoria sought a Freedom of Information request between the Melton City Council and member for the Western Metropolitan region, Moira Deeming.

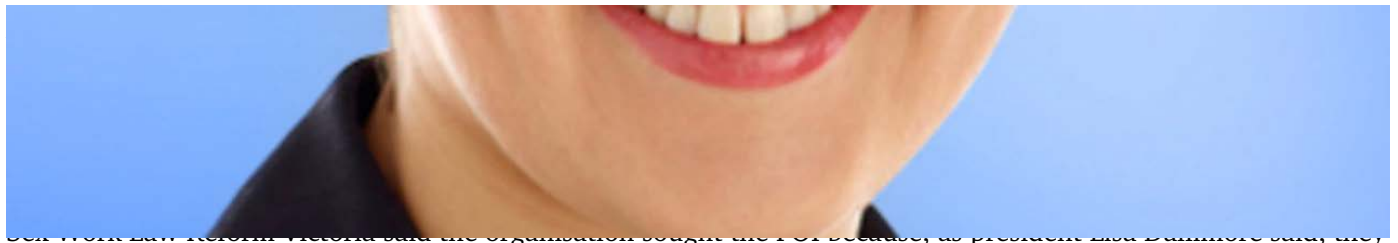
In the explosive emails sent between 2020 and 2022, Ms Deeming shared her intent to change abortion laws in Victoria and expressed a fervent opposition to the LGBTQ++ community, in particular the transgender rights movement.

As a former high school teacher, [Ms Deeming](#) has since critiqued the education sector in Victoria since her win at last year’s state election.

In one email, Deeming said that she did not win her [Liberal preselection](#) on “merit”, rather it was an act of divine intervention.

“I did not win (Liberal Party preselection) on merit ... I won because God arranged it.” she said.





Don't Work Law Reform Victoria said the organisation fought the LOR because, as president Lisa Dallimore said, they believed Deeming was on a mission to break down a raft of human rights imperative to the Victorian community as a whole.

“Ms Deeming is seeking to destroy popular and progressive Victorian government reforms aimed at protecting a range of human rights,” Ms Dallimore said.

“Deeming presents a risk to women’s sexual and reproductive rights, and to the LGBTQBTQ++ and sex worker communities.”

Premier Daniel Andrews on Thursday said Opposition Leader John Pesutto needed to explain whether the Liberal Party shared the same “harmful” views as Ms Deeming.

“I’m not here to try and explain that member of parliament’s views and I’m certainly not here to enter into a debate with that member of parliament because I learnt some time ago that there’s not much point having a debate with someone who makes up their own facts,” he said.

“It’s really a matter for the leader of the Liberal Party to explain to the people of Hawthorn, and indeed all Victorians, are these his views? Are these views that he thinks will be pushed forward?

“Many of these matters were settled a long time ago, and we have no plans to change them — in fact, we were the ones who drove that change.

“We should always be mindful of the sort of damage that those views and this lecturing (can do).”

Mr Andrews said while respectful debate was important, saying “openly transphobic stuff” hurt vulnerable people.

“Comments matter, positions on issues matter. It hurts people,” he said.

“Why would you want to do that? Why would you want to make, what is already a very, very difficult journey for many people, even harder? That just doesn’t make any sense.”

Labor minister Danny Pearson on Thursday said Ms Deeming’s views on abortion were “appalling”.

“I think it would be a retrograde step that would take us back to the dark ages,” he said.

“What do people actually want to see happen? Poorer women who couldn’t afford to see a healthcare professional haemorrhaging in the back alleyways of Melbourne because they can’t afford healthcare?

“That was the lived experience for the generations before us here.

“We are a progressive city. The notion that the rights of women are going to be dragged back to the 1950s, I find appalling.”



Victorian Greens LGBTIQ+ spokeswoman Gabrielle de Vietri said Ms Deeming's emails were "incredibly concerning".

"Trans and gender diverse communities and sex workers are resilient and strong, in the face of disproportionate discrimination and stigma, which come from views like those of Ms Deeming's," Ms de Vietri said.

"The Liberals have a lot to answer for. Why have they knowingly given a platform to someone in this place with such hateful and harmful views?"



Victorian Greens LGBTIQ+ spokeswoman Gabrielle de Vietri says Ms Deeming's emails are 'incredibly concerning'. Picture: Ian Currie

During her maiden address to parliament on Tuesday, Ms Deeming called for an inquiry into transition practices within the state.

Mr Andrews hit back at her inaugural speech, which took aim at sex workers and transgender Victorians' "extreme" attempts at gaining equality.

However, less than 24 hours later the Premier said he had no interest hearing what Ms Deeming had to say.

"I didn't hear her speech, I'm almost certain I won't read it and almost equally certain that the member of parliament would love nothing more than me to be talking about her on the back door of parliament to try and push forward and propagate an agenda," he said.

Mr Andrews went on to say Ms Deeming's stance wasn't an "example of the best of" Victorians.

"You know, we are an inclusive, harmonious, respectful place where equality is not negotiable and that's always been my view; it's always been our policy," he said.

Ms Deeming's speech took aim at inclusive measures including trans women in female-only change rooms and called on the government to reinstate sex-based rights in the law.

She also went on to say “what most women would consider to be sexual harassment and indecent exposure is now legal in Victoria”.

“Surely there must be ways to ensure the safety and dignity of trans people which do not trample on the rights of women and girls,” she said.

— With NCA NewsWire

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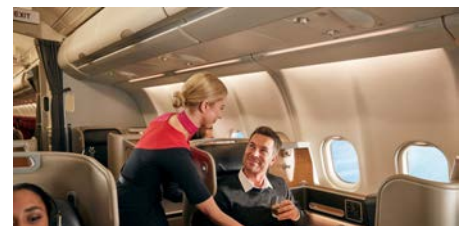
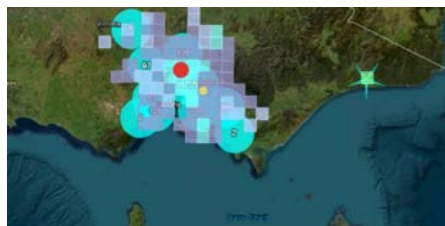
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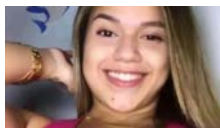
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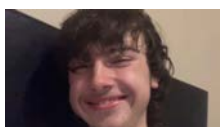
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