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## 'Stop the fighting' between trans activists and women: CEO says as legal deadline looms



Senator Jacinta Nampijinpa Price, Giggle for Girls CEO Sall Grover, former liberal candidate Katherine Deves and Women's Forum CEO Rachael Wong at a protest in Brisbane on Saturday against the Queensland government's move to allow gender self-identification on birth certificates.

By **ANGELICA SNOWDEN**  
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A Gold Coast businesswoman will have to lodge legal arguments in support of her decision to bar a transgender woman from a female-only networking app by early April, amid hopes the looming legal fight will help resolve conflicting rights of both groups.

Founder and chief executive of Giggle for Girls, Sall Grover, is fighting Roxanne Tickle's claim that she was discriminated against on the basis of her gender identity after being denied access to premium features of the app, because "they are male", Ms Grover said.

The case – brought by Ms Tickle – was discontinued in July last year.

But she applied in late December to the Federal Court for an extension of time after receiving "limited" funding to cover "any adverse costs order ... and now wishes to pursue her claim".

On Sunday, Ms Tickle said “there is a legal process underway so I feel to provide a comment at this point would be disingenuous”.

After a hearing last week, orders published by Justice Robert Bromwich outlined in a court document say Ms Grover must file her defence to Ms Tickle’s statement of claim, respond to the request for an extension of time and outline “any” constitutional issues she wants to raise by April 6.



Roxanne Tickle.

The Commonwealth Sex Discrimination Act 1984 was amended in 2013 to make it illegal to treat someone unfavourably on the basis of their gender.

But it allows for “special measures” to achieve equality. This, Ms Grover said, is likely what her team will argue.

“It’s always been you can’t discriminate against anyone except when you can ... (because it is) for a positive reason for that group,” she said on Sunday.

“Female only spaces have existed for such a long time and there has been no controversy in it.”

Should the case proceed, Ms Grover said she hoped it would resolve the

conflict between gender identity and sex.

“My goal is not to strip anyone of their rights. My goal is to make everybody’s rights clear,” she said.

“If we can get clarity on this hopefully it will stop the fighting between women and trans activists.

“Let’s try and find positives to move forward.”

Principal solicitor at the Feminist Legal Clinic, and Ms Grover’s former lawyer, Anna Kerr, said discrimination on the grounds of gender identity was protected in state and federal legislation, but it was “poorly and inconsistently defined”.

“In general terms, state laws that recognise males as legally female undermine the protections of women’s sex-based rights under the Federal Sex Discrimination Act,” she said.

“Section 7B and 7D of the (act) make provisions for services that are designed exclusively for the female sex, and which are reasonable to keep women safe and free from male harassment or to advance their substantive equality.

“However, these provisions are rendered effectively inoperable by state legislation that allows for change of sex on birth certificates, increasingly on the basis of self-declaration only.”

A further hearing in Ms Tickle’s case will be held on April 28 for the “hearing of the interlocutory disputes”, as well as disputes about constitutional arguments.

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