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A GAY couple, the first to be given approval to adopt a child in WA, are still waiting to become parents.

The male couple were given approval by the Department for Community Development in 2003. Three years later, their dream of becoming parents is in limbo.

The two gay men are among 112 couples on a waiting list to adopt a child in WA. Most wait an average of two years for a child, according to the department.

The couple were the first to be approved in WA under controversial laws passed in 2002, which allow same-sex couples to adopt children if they can convince authorities they would make suitable parents. It is the same criteria used for heterosexual couples.

But WA's laws also give relinquishing parents a say in who the new parents will be – meaning the gay couple may never be accepted.

The couple cannot adopt an overseas child because no other country accepts applications from same-sex couples.

The issue has polarised politicians and the community since *The Sunday Times* last year revealed the couple had been given approval to adopt.

Australian Family Association WA president John Barich said allowing the couple to adopt was an "obscene" social

experiment. He was glad the couple were still on a waiting list.

"We don't know how these kids are going to grow up and we're not entitled to impose that on a child – it's a social experiment," Mr Barich said. "Kids need a mum and a dad. That's the natural way.

"There are so many heterosexual couples who are desperate for a child to adopt, and instead, we're going to give a child to two gays or two lesbians. It's just weird. It doesn't make any sense."

Former Opposition leader Matt Birney also disapproves, saying it was disappointing, disturbing and against a child's best interests.

Greens MP Giz Watson, a lesbian whose partner of 17 years has three children, said critics of gay adoption were out of touch.

She was disappointed the couple had not yet been given a child because sexuality had no bearing on being a good parent.