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Committee Secretary
Senate Education, Employment and Workplace Relations Committee
Department of the Senate

SUBMISSION TO SENATE INQUIRY INTO ACADEMIC FREEDOM

I am a year 12 student at a school on the Sunshine Coast in QLD. In Term 2 this year we were required to study Industrial Relations in Business Organisation Management.

This is a topic that needs to be taught, however, from understanding the family business years ago I already understood a lot of the systems and was aware of the changes that have recently taken place. Nevertheless, many students in my class had no idea of what the IR laws were and what affect they had on different people and the attached information was given to us.

Although the assessment task at the end of the term made it open for us to be for or against the topic of the new IR laws and unions, all the information that was given to us was against the Howard government, against Workchoices and encouraging anyone who works to join a union. To write the essay in such a way that it supported work choices you would have been marked down because we were not given the sources to back up our view. You can see in one of the work sheets that I have attached that there was a practice exam question on there that required us to say why unions were so great and why the Howard's government was disadvantaging the 'great' unions by Workchoices.

I sat there throughout this topic with the children around me in class dumbfounded and confused as to why Howard was such a 'horrible' prime minister and had such 'little' care for the average person and to me that is an incorrect notion for children to have in their minds and yes I totally agree that this does need to be taught in school but it doesn't need to be so biased towards one way of life, one government or one person's ideas.

I hope you have received a lot of information in this Senate Inquiry as only being in high school I am seeing political and ideological bias all over the place.

Kindest Regards,

Angela McGuinness