



THE SENATE

**LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS LEGISLATION COMMITTEE**

**Note from committee secretariat**

Approximately 7016 submissions were received that were identical or substantially similar to the attached form letter.

The committee therefore agreed to publish one example of this form letter, along with a cover note setting out the approximate number of submissions received.

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Re: Submission regarding Sex Discrimination Amendment (Removing Discrimination Against Students) Bill 2018

Dear Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee,

I believe faith-based schools in Australia should continue to have the right to uphold their chosen values and ethos. Despite the significant media attention this issue received late last year, there is no evidence of alleged discrimination against LGBT students by faith-based schools. In fact, the leaders of major independent schools have publicly stated that students are not being expelled for their sexuality. Given these assurances, it would appear that changes to anti-discrimination law are being pursued solely for political reasons. If passed, Senator Penny Wong's bill would deny faith-based schools their basic right to religious freedom by forcing them to hire or retain staff whose values and lifestyle do not align with that of the school. By extension, this bill would also compromise the rights of parents who choose faith-based schools for their children. The case for change to the law has not been made. Neither have proposals been put forward that would continue to uphold the rights of faith-based schools, and the rights of parents who choose faith-based schools for their children. Given these failures, I urge the committee to support the existing religious exemptions under anti-discrimination law. Thank you for considering my views on this matter.

Sincerely,

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