



THE SENATE

LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS LEGISLATION COMMITTEE

Note from committee secretariat

Approximately 40 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.

Please accept my submission to the review of the Sex Discrimination Amendment Bill 2018.

I feel compelled to write to this inquiry because I am concerned that the proposed changes to anti-discrimination law contained in the Sex Discrimination Amendment (Removing Discrimination Against Students) Bill 2018 will strip faith-based schools of important freedoms, namely the right to expel or otherwise discipline students based on their sexual behaviour when it completely contradicts and undermines the faith taught in that school.

I believe that this bill should be rejected by our parliament because it clearly contravenes the fundamental right of the school leadership (and ultimately of the parents) to uphold their faith by enrolling and teaching only students who are prepared to abide by it.

Furthermore, it is ridiculous that the Explanatory Memorandum to this bill can state that, "To the extent that [the bill] may limit rights, those limitations are reasonable, necessary and proportionate." How can this be when faith-based schools are in the distinct minority in Australia, and so if a parent or student doesn't agree with their religious ethos then it is a very simple matter just to go to another school? The fact is that this bill will only impact negatively and severely on the rights of those children and parents who value their religious ethos and who already must make many sacrifices to attend these schools in the first place!

I therefore call on the committee to recommend that the parliament should not pass this bill.

Yours sincerely,