



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
**SYDNEY**

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**19 March 2021**

**To: Senator Louise Pratt (Chair)**

Committee Secretary  
Senate Education and Employment Committees  
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**RE: AUSTRALIAN EDUCATION LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (PROHIBITING THE  
INDOCTRINATION OF CHILDREN) BILL 2020**

Dear Committee,

I write in full support of a balanced education system – a system that educates students how to be knowledgeable, good citizens and independent life-long learners. Not everything can be learnt or taught at schools or at home. Factual education cannot be mistaken for indoctrination.

It is important that from a young age, children are exposed to opposing views. More importantly, we need to teach them how to engage in respectful and open-minded discussion on contentious issues (such as our responsibilities and duties to the aboriginals and their land, the climate risk, global warming, environmental degradation, sustainability, gender fluidity, cultural differences, religion, racism, technological advancement, cyber security and no doubt many other issues). The complication arises as to how much parents want their children to know, the child's capacity to process the information for good use versus bad use and the stance that educators take on the issue. This makes the content of educational curricula a complicated matter both from the teacher and parent's perspective. The situation gets even more complex when parents and educators are living in a multicultural society where the parents are mentally



living in the education system of their own upbringing but their children are now being educated in a Western society such as Australia.

The important thing is to find a middle ground for educators, students and parents. Education is for learning and creating new knowledge based on facts and fundamentals, developing critical thinking skills and using it to make the world a better place. Reality should not be mistaken for gimmicks or dismissed as being “too early to learn”.

There is certainly merit in the argument of whether certain issues should be taught when children are not of an age or maturity to understand right and wrong. However, educational curricula designed based on science, scientific or data driven evidence should always be our first point of protocol for the development of our younger generation. Perhaps we should also consider the need for parents to engage in some level of educational sessions/forums for them to better understand any potentially contentious material and provide feedback through open dialogue with educators prior to any decisions about what to teach or not to teach are made. Our schools, colleges, universities and vocational training centers need to provide appropriately balanced tools and knowledge so that our future generation can be successful in their lives and good to others.

The Federal Government plays an important role in the revision of our education system and ensuring its curriculum is aligned with the practicality and realities of life. Therefore, a revision of this Bill provides a perfect opportunity for Australians to be involved in having their voices heard.

Sincerely,

Shumi

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