

To The Honourable Members of Parliament

Dear Sir/ Madam

I am writing to you as a fellow Indigenous Australian with voting rights. I am glad that we live in a free and democratic society.

- 1) I ask you is it true that there is a Bill before Parliament relating to community Educational funding?
- 2) Is that Bill known as the “Indigenous Education (Targeted Assistance) Amended Bill 2005”?
- 3) I ask why is this proposed Bill in existence.
- 4) What is its purpose?

I would like to draw your attention to the fact that I have been a student at Tranby Aboriginal Co-operative College for the last four years. I have also attended “mainstream Educational facilities such as, Nepean University Campus, Granville TAFE, St Marys High School.

In reflection to my time at these educational facilities I can say from my experience that Tranby College has been the most enlightening place of learning. For me as an Indigenous Australian the Culturally appropriate learning makes me stay in my courses and I know that this learning style has helped me to gain knowledge and understanding which in “mainstream facilities” is not available.

Let’s be honest here your “mainstream educational system” is antiquated as it has evolved from slate boards and chalk; we are now in a computerised era of learning.

Tranby College by contrast allows Indigenous Australians their right to appropriate learning and is at the cutting edge of education appropriate to our Indigenous culture melded with the present day needs of the Australian communities.

Education is the mutual sharing of knowledge, not any particular knowledge or presented by any person in particular.

Education should be taught appropriately in a culturally appropriate way. After all as a parent you don’t break out and teach your child Algebra or a foreign language at 6 months of age! Or do you?

I hold both trades and Professional qualifications. I believe my experience is valid as I have lived in all but one state of Australia and I now work with troubled youth in my home community.

I strongly believe that if this Bill were to be brought into existence the very fabric of Our society and communities would be at risk of further decay. As it is noted in various research statistics that poor education is one of the major contributing factors, which directly correlates with criminal misbehaviour.

5) Why is it that our community based educational facilities actually out strip “mainstream facilities” with retention rates?

I can say as a product of the community based and culturally appropriate learning I have participated in at Tranby Co-operative College, that I am able to work in my community with the confidence from my education gained at Tranby. I share this information with other members of my community.

Further, Tranby’s commitment to sharing education enables students to come from all over Australia and therefore the knowledge gained is shared far and wide to the absolute benefit of these communities.

I believe strongly that if you allow the pending Amendments to the Bill to come into existence you will be doing a great disservice to our country and the community in general.

Finally, I would like to say that as we are the original inhabitants of this land and our culture has nearly been lost and is influenced by the history of the way in which this country was taken. I believe in the name of true Reconciliation we are entitled to continue our education as I have alluded to in this script.

I ask you to believe in the example of Tranby’s continuing successes (over 50 years) and the positive outcomes from the past. Please think before you vote as Indigenous Australians can and have given back to communities from all over Australia

I would ask you to oppose this Amendment to the Bill for the reasons listed above.

I look forward to your reply and answers to my questions thankyou
Without prejudice
Sincerely

Steve Delaney