

### **RELIGIOUS DISCRIMINATION BILL**

My approach to the religious discrimination bill is that private religious schools should be free to be private religious schools and that hiring staff and accepting students should reflect the ethos of the school.

If the government is going to legislate to prevent this and insist that private religious schools should hire homosexual or lesbian staff that would cut across the basic idea of a private religious school which is to provide an environment conducive to Christian beliefs. Homosexuality is proscribed in the Bible which is the basic book of all Christian religions.

If the government says that these schools must accept homosexual staff and students, then these schools might decide to shut up shop and go out of business because they would be unable to fulfil their basic function of providing an environment conducive to Christian teaching.

I am unable to see why an independent private religious school should not be allowed to operate as such an entity. I think it borders on tyranny that every such body must be subject to the Sex Discrimination Act even if it means that such a body might have to go out of existence.

Is it the federal funding that is the problem? If such schools were to operate without federal funding they would have to operate in a much more restricted fashion to keep fees down. But then private businesses still must obey the Sex Discrimination Act so maybe that would not change anything.

People talk about freedom in Australia. Maybe freedom is not that important and other things are more important. It would be a sad day for Australia if it became impossible for Christian schools to operate as Christian schools in Australia.

Greg Byrne

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