

To Whom it may concern,

24 February 2023

As Christian's, we write regarding the Australian Law Reform Commission Inquiry: Religious Educational Institutions and Anti-Discrimination Laws.

Our parents are Christian's and, in accordance with the promises they made at my baptism before God and His church, they wanted me to be taught about the Bible and to be nurtured in the Christian faith and in godliness to the best of their ability.

Fifteen years ago, we also made these vows to our four children who currently attend private Christian schools in Perth.

At these two campuses, we and our children, are taught to see various subjects in the light of God's word. These campuses are spiritually safe and, on a whole, have a nurturing environment. Both staff and students share the same faith and work reflecting the fruit of that faith in mutual love and Christian care.

We are a community of faith. A Christian community of faith that draws comfort and encouragement from what is confessed and applies the norms and principles of that faith.

Speaking as a Christian's, we see the Christian school as vitally important. It allows Christian teachers to help Christian parents nurture their children in the Christian faith and they help prepare the students for a life of faith in the service of God.

As Christian's, we have not witnessed or experienced discrimination. We are concerned that the proposed laws will be used to discriminate against Christian educational institutions which seek to teach and act in faithfulness to God's Holy Word, and which refrain from subscribing to, and promoting, ideologies which seek to revolt against the norms of God's Word.

Religious educational institutions must be permitted to act in accordance with the Christian norms, beliefs and values of God's Word, as has been the practice for countless decades. Other faith-based schools must likewise have the freedom to employ staff who in doctrine and life will uphold and promote their faith, providing such institutions are not used as a base to promote terrorism.

When preferencing members of the same religion, evidence of doctrine and life which accords with the faith of the religious community should be taken into account. A Christian school for example must be able to ensure that all staff teach and model a Christian life, both at school and outside of school which is in accordance with Bible, the divinely inspired Word of God.

Unimportant or doubtful things which are not clearly required or prescribed in the doctrine of the institution (i.e. the doctrine of the Bible or in the churches confession) should not be permitted to be taken into account.

A teacher needs, for example, particular educational qualifications in order to be able to teach, without necessarily needing secretarial skills; others need qualifications in order to attend to the institutions finances without requiring teaching skills, etc. However, all staff should be expected to model the behavior and beliefs espoused by the institution.

Please continue to uphold religious freedoms so that our schools can continue to provide Christian schooling.

Kind regards,

Damien & Linda Van Dyk

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