

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 discriminate against faith-based schools by stripping them of important freedoms, namely the right to expel or otherwise discipline students based on their sexual behaviour if and when that behaviour completely contradicts and undermines the faith and values 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 make 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,

Robert F Cridland