



LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS LEGISLATION COMMITTEE

Note from committee secretariat

Approximately 570 submissions were received that were identical or substantially similar to the attached form letter.

The committee therefore agreed to publish one example of this form letter, along with a cover note setting out the approximate number of submissions received.

Dear Chair and Committee Members,

I strongly oppose the Penny Wong bill which seeks to take away exemptions for religious based educational/training institutions in the Sex Discrimination Act 84.

Australia needs to ensure people of religion are free to practice and teach their faith and to ensure no one is forced by the government to do things against their religious belief.

What the Church is practicing is only adherence to what it believes as God's Word, which cannot be altered by government.

If we are serious about doing good for our country, I believe Christianity has never been more important in terms of its values and its significance. Christianity is one of the vital pillars of western civilization in teaching people about the difference between right and wrong.

The Church has become the target of persecution. It is manifested by the pushing of this Bill in the Senate even before the government has a chance to implement proper legal protection for religious freedom in response to the Ruddock recommendations.

In my experience, Catholic and Christian schools and Christian schools have been providing a loving and caring environment to ALL students. This is confirmed by the continued popularity of parents' decision to send their children to these schools. Our community has also benefited from the church's outreach charitable work supporting those who are forgotten, the homeless and the distressed.

A religion that cannot even speak and live its doctrines is merely a historical ritual, not a faith.

The Penny Wong Bill needs to be rejected and the current exemptions to the Sex Discrimination Act which provide at least some protection for religious freedom be maintained.

Thank you for your consideration.