

Howard Smith

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Committee Secretary
Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Subject: Religious Freedom in Australian schools

My name is Howard Smith. I am the father of 3 successful adult children, and a grandfather of 7 grandchildren. I have a passionate faith in Jesus Christ, and it distresses me to see our once faithful society turning more and more to immorality and moral relativism.

The consequences of abolishing religious freedom in schools:

To be consistent with the Christian faith, Christian Schools and organisations must adhere to the tenets of the scripture. It is a denial of God and a repudiation of faith for Christian organisations to employ people who do not adhere to these tenets.

It is participating in the sin of others, which the Bible forbids.

The Bible exhorts us not to facilitate sin, but to challenge it, and to separate ourselves from it. (Love the sinner hate the sin.)

Allowing people with anti-Christian views to work in Christian schools is tantamount to approving of these anti-Christian views, which in faith, we cannot do.

You may not agree with this position, but in the interest of freedom of religion, which is supposed to be guaranteed by our constitution, then this difference is to be encouraged and respected.

Never forget that the whole basis of our country and its legislature is a direct inheritance from Christianity.

While ever the Light of Jesus Christ shines in this country, there is light and hope, and a bastion against evil and disorder. Every step away from this is a step into deep darkness.

Christian schools and organisations are a light in this darkness, and must be exempt from legal sanctions for practising their faith. Failure to do this is a blow against freedom in Australia, and another step towards totalitarianism.

If you think that this is a bridge too far, consider what Aristotle said: "Give me the child up to the age of 7 and I will show you the Man" If we allow immoral and ungodly input to our children, what kind of people and what kind of society are we creating? And if the state determines what we may or may not believe, or whether we can have religious freedom, this is totalitarianism.

It is of primary importance for our society and our country to protect religious freedom throughout our society, but especially in our schools.

Howard Smith