



ATTORNEY-GENERAL

CANBERRA

MC14/03755

Dr Dennis Jensen MP  
Chair  
Standing Committee on Petitions  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600



Dear Dr Jensen

Thank you for your letter of 2 January 2014 regarding the petition submitted to the Standing Committee on Petitions, regarding legislation for the separation of church and state.

Religious freedom is of very great importance in Australian society. The Australian Government values freedom of belief as an essential feature of our multicultural and diverse democracy.

The petition has asked the House of Representatives to legislate to 1) prohibit the Government establishing any religion or providing any advantage to religion or non-faith as an effect of legislation; and 2) prohibit the passing of any law or undertaking any administrative action that allows the sponsoring or supporting of any religions or alternative non-faiths such as atheism. The Government has no plans to legislate in such a manner at this time. The Government considers that the prohibitions contained in section 116 of the Constitution adequately protect religious freedom.

I hope this information is of assistance to the Committee when considering this petition.

Yours faithfully

(George Brandis)