

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Anti Discrimination Law](#)
Subject: Removing religious protections will eliminate the difference between religious and state schools
Date: Thursday, 16 February 2023 6:50:29 AM

Dear Australian Law Reform Commission,

We wish to submit our views regarding the Religious Educational Institutions and Anti-Discrimination Laws consultation paper.

We were dismayed to discover that point 1 of Proposition B seeks to remove the right of faith-based schools to take into account current or prospective staff members' "sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital or relationship status, or pregnancy" by outlawing so-called discrimination on these grounds.

But making employment decisions based on these attributes is absolutely essential for the very existence of religious schools. Taking away the ability to maintain a staff body unified in the same beliefs and living according to the school's principles will effectively make faith-based schools religious in name only and no different from their secular counterparts.

We are also concerned that the inability of schools to discriminate on grounds such as gender identity will result in faith-based schools being forced accommodate "trans-gender" students to the point of having to allow a boy who identifies as a girl to access girls' safe spaces at school, to play in girls' sports, to be recognised by a new name and pronouns, and to dress as a female.

Point 3 of proposition D further harms faith-based schools by saying, "Respect for an educational institution's ethos and codes of conduct or behaviour should not require employees to hide their own sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital or relationship status, or pregnancy in connection with work or in private life, or to refrain from supporting another person with these attributes." Furthermore, one of the examples contained in the consultation paper even goes so far as to say that a teacher should "teach the school's particular beliefs around sexuality, as long as the teacher was permitted to objectively discuss the existence of alternative views about other lifestyles, relationships, or sexuality in a manner appropriate to the context"!

However, if faith-based schools are forced to relinquish their rightful exemptions from the Sex Discrimination Act, as the ALRC is recommending, no school will be able to remain free from trans-gender ideology, inappropriate sexual teaching, and public homosexual relationships. This will deny parents the choice of providing their children with an education in accordance with their religious beliefs.

Please do not eliminate the essential difference between religious and state schools by removing basic religious protections and imposing a uniformly secular understanding of education on all schools.

Yours sincerely,

Drs Sandy and Paul Kershaw

