

Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

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From: [REDACTED]
To: [Education, Employment, Training and Skills Committee](#)
Subject: Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024
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Dear Committee Members,

I am writing to express concern over the proposed changes to home education that the Minister for Education placed before this committee.

I have had both the pleasure and privilege of home educating our two sons - now aged 13 and 10 - since the beginning of their 'schooling' years. It is a daily joy (and valuable work) to have opportunity to do this, and I believe, a parental right to do so. Home education has been of great benefit to both of our sons and our whole family. And having previously been a teacher in state, private, international, primary and secondary schools over a 17 year career, I know that the choice to home educate our children has been one of the best and wisest decisions we have ever made.

Now these new proposals are jeopardising this well-thought out choice. The bill introduced by the Hon Di Farmer has a number of problematic and inconsistent proposals that will adversely affect all home educators currently registered with the Home Education Unit.

A few of these include:

- Having to prove that home education is in my child's best interests. As a parent who knows and loves my children and wants their success, why should I have to prove that they should be anywhere other than at home, learning? And if this proposal becomes law, who will determine that home education is in my sons' best interests - with the government obviously under the assumption that I am not capable of making that decision? Another government level of red tape? A medical doctor? A psychologist? What is the government requiring here and why would they put children and families in this difficult position - and doubt an educated and law-abiding parents' personal preferences in caring for and educating their children?
- Having to implement the Australian National Curriculum in my home education learning program. I currently refer to ACARA on occasion in our sons' learning programs, as it is optional with the HEU. However, it was one of the very reasons I was glad to leave the school and education system before I started home educating our own children. It does not allow for individual learning, it is far too left leaning and 'one size' does not fit all. Surely the standard of education currently being delivered in many Queensland State Schools shows that this is not the ideal curriculum for Queensland children. It was also not a well received curriculum by a number of other states who did not originally implement it in their schools. Nor do all other state's home education departments require it of their registered families.
- Having to report to HEU on an annual basis to show progress in all subjects of the Australian Curriculum puts a ridiculous load on students, parents and to be honest, HEU staff. For many years already, HEU staff have taken months (up to 6!) to respond to the annual report I have had to submit as part of my legal requirement to remain registered as a home educator. That is with a report that fulfilled the

requirements and included 3 subjects reported on. I wonder what the time lag would be for 8 subjects to review and respond to? I know that time required for writing my reports and plans will surely double (at least). And it is already a process that takes weeks to prepare and submit. Valuable time that could be better spent - educating my children!

- The idea that HEU can request reporting for times when we are not registered. Currently, there is ample opportunity for HEU to monitor my child's educational progress through the annual report and learning program submission that all HEU registered families must do.

Creating an irrational and unsustainable planning and reporting system is setting people up for failure, when government should be doing the opposite.

To me, the best thing I can do as a home educating parent is provide a 'high quality' education for my child (as current laws state). An education that I, my husband and children determine it to be. Government legislation should not take away my right to do this, especially when for the last eight years I have been proving - on an annual basis via HEU reporting and learning program submission - that home education is working for my child and our family.

Please carefully consider all the evidence you will receive from other concerned home educating parents regarding this bill. Many will share stories of how the school system, following the Australian National Curriculum, was actually harmful to their child/ren and how their home education experience has transformed their family. While that is not my story, I urge you to take seriously every home educating parent and students' experience of how developing their own, individual student-focussed curriculum has provided a high quality education for their child/ren. Evidence that home schooling regulations do not need amending and should remain as they are.

Thank you for your time.

Kirsty Van Itallie

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13th March, 2024