

## Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

**Submission No:** 278  
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**Submitter Comments:**

I am writing to you with my concerns regarding the proposed amendments to the education bill that has recently been presented to parliament. As a home educating parent, I do not support some of these changes that have been introduced and I am worried about the impact that they will have on my family and the homeschooling community.

I am Tertiary educated, and my husband has completed adult learning when he changed careers after 13 years in the Australian Defence Force. Our six-year-old is not yet of mandatory age for registering, and although I have an education plan written for HEU to submit these changes proposed make me reconsider the template used. He has recently been diagnosed with neurodiversities and would fall under "diverse learner". We chose to home educate before we trialed the school system, recognizing that our child would be failed by the system and both his mental health and mine would be severely impacted. Researching and facilitating home education takes a lot of time and energy, but we have decided to follow this path with our child because they don't respond to imposed learning. I am aware of multiple curricula, as well as vast locations of resources and plenty of areas to explore, which I can utilize for my child when he shows readiness or interest. I oppose the Australian Curriculum (ACARA) being added to the legislation for homeschooling as we would not be able to follow it, but I am aware of where to find it if I need it. The changes to Clause 68 Section 217 would vastly increase the time I would take to report and that would take away from time spent with my children. Whilst I have already mentioned ACARA not being in my child's best interest, the workload of meeting HEU requirements would greatly increase in having further documentation to review. There are already increased numbers of families moving to home education, and with this comes a greater volume of applications, reports and plans: how much of our documentation is actually reviewed?

I am particularly concerned about the removal of provisional registration for the safety of other children. I have heard numerous accounts of children not being safe in schools, from physical and sexual assaults, to mental wellbeing including anxiety, threats of suicide and acts of self-harm. Taking away this 60-day window to submit a plan for parents who are already going through enormous upheavals to their lifestyle, including possible financial stress as they transition to home educating, whilst dealing with the high stress of having a child struggling, is simply unjust. In the interest of safety, I strongly oppose this change.

The reduction in the show cause response time from 28 days to 14 days adds increased pressure on to families who are responsible for home educating, and often also work and have other commitments. Families that get these show cause notices need MORE time to learn how to provide appropriate responses when no help or training is provided beyond volunteers in the community. I hope not to receive such notice, but if I do, I would be filled with anxiety and guilt of failing my child.

Who would determine whether my child is eligible for home education? Why does this person get to over-rule my parental rights? Why would I not value my child's future enough to give him a high- quality education, that HEU would oversee through

my plan and yearly reporting? How would this assessment to determine eligibility be performed? My child shuts down at any form of comparison or judgement, and I do not want him to have to jump through hoops to prove that he should be homeschooled. I strongly oppose this change.

I eagerly anticipate your reply to my questions.

Sincerely,

Zoe Cutts