

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

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# *Submission on the Draft Legislation for Homeschooling*

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## *Introduction:*

I am a registered teacher in Qld, having worked for 8 years with Australian Christian Academy, a homeschooling provider (1998-2005), and later with Jubilee Christian College (2014-2021). I completed a Master of Education degree in 2005, which included a research project on Australian homeschooling students.

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If the Department wishes to change the regulations governing home education in Qld, there are some considerations that could make the review of regulations more fruitful, in my opinion. What are these?

Firstly, the vast majority of homeschoolers are conservative, ideologically, socially and politically. They consider themselves conscientious and responsible for their children's education, and they are highly unlikely to believe, let alone accept what they consider to be ideological or educational fads or "trendy" educational ideas.

Secondly, they are unlikely to accept or even tolerate intrusive regulations, which they may well consider onerous, demeaning and disrespectful of them as responsible parents.

Thirdly, while physical attendance at school for some homeschooled children may be impossible due to distance, the rapidly rising numbers of families choosing to homeschool, indicates that homeschooling is increasingly an urban phenomenon, as well. This commonly occurs if families have had bad experiences at school, or if some of their friends have, or for many other reasons.

I recently received this unsolicited request from a parent, in relation to the Department's proposed changes, claiming that

*...These measures will take away our freedom and flexibility to educate our children in their best interests.*

*We are currently free to choose to educate our children in a manner which aligns to the Australian Curriculum if we deem it to be the best option for our child, however the Government's proposed changes will take away every other choice we had available to us, and will cause significant harm to the academic outcomes, and overall wellbeing of our children.*

*I'm asking if there is some way that the homeschool community of Queensland could have your support in rallying awareness, discussion around these changes, and help us fight for our children please?*

Another parent wrote another unsolicited request, saying,

*...I'm concerned that the legislation has been introduced without proper consultation with current homeschooling families. I hope that you would be able to look into this concerning issue that will affect all QLD home educating parents, and help us raise awareness that we do not support these changes.*

Fourth, the confidence amongst many home schoolers is such, that in the face of what they consider to be oppressive regulations, many will ignore the Department's regulations and join the ranks of those who could be deemed "Shadow Homeschoolers:" those who continue to home school, whilst rejecting and refusing the registration process.

Conclusion:

If the Department of Education wishes to avoid a wholesale exodus of families from the home schooling registration process, any review of the Department's regulations should ensure that these are minimalist and descriptive in nature, rather than prescriptive for the families concerned.

Your faithfully,

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