

Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

Submission No: 767
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Publication: Making the submission and your name public
Attachments: No attachment

Submitter Comments:

Dear Committee Members, As a homeschooling parent of two neurodivergent children, I am deeply disappointed by the proposed changes to homeschooling legislation. For many children with disabilities and neurodivergences, homeschooling is not just a choice but a necessity—an opportunity to create an environment where they can thrive at their own pace and in their own unique way. Children with disabilities often face significant challenges in traditional school settings, where rigid structures and standardized approaches may not accommodate their diverse needs. This was the personal experience of our family. Homeschooling has provided a lifeline for my children, offering the flexibility and personalized support they require to learn and grow in a safe and nurturing environment. Homeschooling is not an ‘easy option’, as anyone deeply invested in it will tell you, and some of these proposed changes will make it nigh on impossible to actually provide our children with a high-quality education, undermining the very purpose of the proposed legislation. I made the conscious choice to homeschool many years ago, recognizing that the mainstream educational system did not suit or, perhaps, might even harm my children. Over the years, I've had the privilege of homeschooling four children, each with their unique learning styles, interests, and needs. These experiences have provided me with invaluable insights into the challenges and opportunities of homeschooling. I firmly believe that without lived experience, it's challenging to fully grasp the intricacies of homeschooling and to understand what legislative measures are truly needed to ensure homeschooled children receive a quality education. It's not merely about enforcing rigid curriculum requirements but rather about fostering an environment that empowers parents to provide personalized, holistic education tailored to their children's individual needs and aspirations. While the Australian curriculum may be presented as a superior option, it's essential to acknowledge that it's just one of many possibilities. For some children, it may indeed be adequate, but for others, it may not align with their learning preferences or life goals. This underscores the importance of offering diverse schooling options and supporting parents in making informed decisions about their children's education. I urge the committee to approach homeschooling legislation with a deep appreciation for the lived experiences of homeschooling families and a commitment to ensuring that all children have access to a quality education that meets their unique needs. By listening to the voices of homeschooling parents and advocating for policies that promote flexibility, autonomy, and inclusivity, we can create a more equitable and responsive educational system for all. In conclusion, the changes in relation to home education are ill considered and inappropriate. The bill will have a disproportionate impact on families who are dealing with a range of personal and health issues that contribute to the decision to home school, and will alienate a large group of Queensland voters. Thank you for considering my perspective.