

Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

Submission No: 784
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Submitter Comments:

Dear Committee Members, I hope this email finds you well! I am writing to express some concerns regarding the proposed changes to homeschooling legislation. My understanding is that ACARA as an education body should be working towards outcomes beneficial to all students. From what I can see in the amendment bill, it seems that the proposed changes are focused on ensuring that students and teachers align to the education plan created by ACARA. While it is important to have an education plan in mind, many students (myself included) benefit most when their education is tailored to suit their individual needs. It appears that ACARA are enforcing a rigid education plan that suits their own agenda instead of providing for those that they are sworn to serve. Why do families choose homeschooling? In my experience, homeschooling is chosen for a variety of diverse reasons, including dissatisfaction (or disgust) with the traditional schooling system, safety and bullying issues, religious or philosophical beliefs, or a desire for more personalised and flexible learning experiences. Inclusion and diversity are being touted as important issues of modern society. Forcing students and teachers to adhere to a 'one-size-fits-all' education plan undermines these very issues. Should we not be inclusive of those who wish to be educated differently as we are inclusive of those from different races, genders, social status, and religions? My education was primarily conducted through homeschooling - Mum organised all the resources for my primary/early secondary education and then I transitioned to using the curriculum provided by ACE. I am now a classically trained pianist with a Masters in Music Research. I teach piano and theory to over 20 private students after school and have a growing performance practice (in both solo and chamber music). I certainly thrived in the homeschooling environment as it allowed me to focus on my strengths without forcing me to adhere to a strict education plan. My recommendation to the parliamentary committee is to 'inspire improvement in the learning of all young Australians' (ACARA, 2024, <https://www.acara.edu.au/about-us>) by listening to and working with families when it comes to their education. Doing so means that we can work towards a more inclusive and diverse model of education that benefits all involved. Thank you for your attention to this matter! Regards, Crystal Smith