


Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

Submission No: 940
Submitted by: 
Publication:
Attachments: No attachment
Submitter Comments:

Dear Committee Members,

I write to you with a pressing concern regarding the proposed changes to homeschooling legislation and their impact on children with disabilities and special learning needs.

As a homeschooling parent deeply committed to advocating for the rights of all children to receive a quality education, I urge the committee to consider the unique challenges faced by families of children with disabilities and to ensure that the proposed changes adequately support their educational needs.

It is no secret that many children with disabilities have struggled within traditional school settings, where resources and support may be insufficient or inaccessible. For these children, homeschooling often represents a lifeline—an opportunity to receive a personalized, tailored education that meets their individual needs and abilities.

I almost lost my eldest child to suicide in the main stream system. His cries for help went unanswered. He was failing academically and was being bullied in the classroom as well as the school yard – and no-one seemed to care.

Through homeschooling we have managed to put the pieces of a fragile child back together again.

He has gone from being unable to read and write at age 10 to having completed a Cert II in Automotive Electrical Technology, a Barrister and Coffee Art course as well a course for Safe Handling of Food last year at just 15 years old. Along the way he has also completed many cooking courses, animal husbandry courses, photography courses as well as his First Aid Certificate and Bronze Medallion.

We have slowly worked on rebuilding his self-esteem and worked with his many therapists to create a program that is achievable allowing for his disabilities, his PTSD from the school system and his learning resistance developed from the trauma of school.

None of this would have been achievable had we been forced to follow the same program that was being used in the school system and failing him.

The proposed changes risk further marginalizing children with disabilities by imposing rigid curriculum requirements that may not be suitable or feasible for them. Many of these children may require alternative approaches to learning that focus on developing functional skills, fostering independence, and promoting inclusion within their communities.

I urge the committee to consider how the proposed changes will impact homeschooling children with disabilities who are unable to learn within the confines of a traditional curriculum. What provisions will be made to ensure that these children receive the support and accommodations they need to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally?

Furthermore, I implore the committee to recognize the invaluable role that homeschooling parents play in advocating for their children and providing them with the specialized support they require. Rather than imposing top-down mandates, let us work collaboratively to develop policies that empower parents to make informed decisions about their children's education and ensure that all children, regardless of ability, have access to the resources and support they need to succeed.

In conclusion, I urge the committee to prioritize the needs of children with disabilities in the drafting of homeschooling legislation and to ensure that the proposed changes support their right to receive an appropriate and inclusive education that is not limited by one curriculum.

Thank you for your attention and consideration.

Sincerely,

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of the sender.

Homeschool Parent and Advocate