

Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

Submission No: 1399
Submitted by: [REDACTED]
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Submitter Comments:

Subject: Concerns Regarding Proposed Homeschooling Legislation Changes

Dear Committee members,

I am deeply concerned and opposed to the proposed changes in homeschool legislation. As a parent who never thought homeschooling would be my path, I urge you to reconsider these changes, particularly their potential impact on neurodivergent children.

My husband and I have run a successful small business in Queensland for over twenty years. We actively contribute to the community, providing work experience for local high school students and supporting academic achievement through award-night donations. I have now stepped back from our company to home-educate our child.

We witnessed our child's increasing disengagement for the past two years, culminating in school refusal this past year. The traditional school environment presented numerous challenges for our child:

- **Curriculum:** The rigid curriculum structure didn't cater to his learning style, leading to frustration and difficulty keeping up.
- **Teacher Pacing:** Teachers often moved too quickly through the Curriculum, leaving him overwhelmed and confused.
- **Overstimulating Classrooms:** The crowded and noisy classroom environment exacerbated his sensory sensitivities, hindering his ability to focus and learn.

These struggles, coupled with his declining mental health, left us with no choice but to explore alternative educational options.

The decision to homeschool wasn't easy. However, it was the only way to prioritise my son's well-being. Home education has been a transformative experience focusing on his interests and fostering a safe and supportive learning environment. We've even replaced the word "school" with "education" to eliminate the negative association it previously held for him.

Through home education, we've discovered that project-based, interest-driven learning works best for him. He's regaining his confidence, re-engaging with learning and exploring his passions. The rigid structure of a standardised curriculum would hinder his progress and potentially trigger further anxiety.

The proposed emphasis on standardised curriculum and reporting requirements under Clause 68 directly contradicts this successful approach. This "one-size-fits-all" model would be detrimental to my son and countless other neurodivergent children who thrive in diverse learning environments.

As his parent, I know him best. I was there for his first steps and words, and am confident I can support his educational needs. Home education has:

- Restored his self-confidence
- Helped him rediscover his passions
- Allowed us to integrate essential life skills into his education

The proposed changes threaten the progress we've made. I wouldn't be here if the school system were safe and effective for my son. Home education has saved him, and I would do anything to see him continue to thrive. Shouldn't parents have a say in what educational method works best for their children, especially those with diverse learning styles and compromised mental health due to an unsafe school environment?\

We need an education system that celebrates diverse learners, not restricts their educational opportunities. I urge you to reconsider the proposed changes and recognise their potential negative impact on neurodivergent children and families who have found success in home education.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

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