

Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

Submission No: 1477
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Submitter Comments:

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to express my concern regarding the recent education legislation changes that have been proposed in Qld. As a home educating parent, I feel several of the proposed changes will negatively impact our family, as well as many other home educating families around the state.

I am a university educated mother of two and after working in finance and taxation (in the private and government sector) I chose to put my career on hold to home educate my eldest child after noticing an increase in school refusal and anxiety in my previously happy and carefree child. We easily registered with HEU using the current process and have been home schooling for the last 3 years supplying plans and reports each year demonstrating high quality education. During this time I have been happy to see the positive impact it has had for my child, she is not only excelling academically but she is truly engaged in her learning.

The proposed legislation raises several concerns that I believe need to be addressed. Firstly, the inclusion at clause 18, section 7 “is in the best interests of the child or young person taking into account their safety and wellbeing”

My concern is how will this be determined? Is it enough for a parent, who knows their child best, to state that it is in the child’s best interest? Will official letters be required from health professionals? Will HEU staff be deciding this based on the parents’ submission? As a parent the decision to home school is not taken lightly, it comes after much research and investigation to determine if it would be a better fit for their child. This could be based on negative experiences at school, health issues or even family circumstances. This clause is insulting as it implies that a parent would not be putting the child’s best interest first and that a third party (who most probably does not know the child) will need to act as judge to determine this.

Secondly, the inclusion at clause 68, section 217 (1)(b) “be consistent with an approved education and training program”

My concern is the extra administrative burden this will place on parents while having no benefit to the home educated child. The current reporting process already ensures that parents are planning a well-rounded, high-quality education for their child, and allows the parent to tailor this to the unique interests and aptitude of their child. While I could link all our current learning to the areas outlined in ACARA, the process of doing so would take me a lot longer in administrative work as I have not undertaken study to link learning outcomes to ACARA in the way a trained teacher has. This would then reduce the time I have to spend actually teaching and organising learning experiences for my child. The benefit of home schooling is the ability to tailor learning to the child in a way that the public education system cannot, it is akin to the highest quality private education. Limiting a student’s study options to the Australian Curriculum will not result in better education outcomes for students.

I have understood that the motivation to make these legislation changes is, at its heart, to ensure that all children have access to high quality education, but these proposed changes will not have that affect and may in fact have a negative effect on students. I urge you to consider my submission, as well as the many other submissions from home educating parents that have been sent in relation to these changes. We have hands on experience on the process of home educating, planning, reporting and also have firsthand knowledge of the effects on our children.

Yours sincerely

Anja Vecchi