

Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

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To the Hon. Di Farmer and Committee Members

I am writing to express my objection to the proposed changes to the way children are taught in the Home Education environment.

This is a brief story. I was educated at home right from grade 1. From the moment I was born, my Mum knew she wanted to teach me at home. To see the wonder in my face as I learned new things and to travel this learning journey together. I have never been to mainstream school. My mother worked hard to educate my sisters and me. She made great emphasis on following my interests and passions. She supported me and tailored my learning around those interests.

The freedom this allows has fostered a great love of learning. My passion was and still is the weather. Being schooled at home allowed spur of the moment opportunities to go out and study storms. I was out storm chasing with my mum, studying the weather patterns through graphs, taking photographs, visiting the BOM in Brisbane and watching DVD's about severe weather. This led to a love of Science and Maths, learning about how storms and cyclones were formed, climate change and all things Meteorology. Being able to learn what I was interested in, encompassed all learning areas. My dad is an Optometrist and I was able to learn about optics and the eyes through him. This is another interest I developed, also related to Science and Maths. It is very possible to find amazing learning opportunities associated with all subject areas that are not a part of an antiquated system, such as the Australian Curriculum.

Each year my Mother sent in my reports and plans to the HEU and each year they were passed. This is a process that does not need to be altered, it is very time consuming already. Have you or the Committee looked into how this works? Have you even consulted the Homeschooling Community to get their views? If not, your new proposals are extremely unfair. Making homeschoolers learn 8 subject areas the same as its taught in schools would be extremely detrimental due to the workload involved, the different learning styles of the individual, and the fact that learning at home is just plain different than the school environment.

Have you heard of the saying "Mother knows best"? Well, telling a child what to learn and how to learn is a job for teachers at a mainstream school. They get the training and they get paid. Mums know their kids and love their kids, this is why home education is so successful. Will you be adding home educating parents to the payroll if you force them to follow your system? Training? Equipment? Books? Support?

I am still a teenager, but I went for my first job interview at 17, got the job and have excelled in every area of my workplace. I am a qualified Optical Dispenser, using Maths and Science in my everyday work life. All due to my love of learning, that was instigated by my Mum's wisdom to follow my passions. I have also learned many other areas of my job and am excited to learn more. My desire to learn has been nurtured and not forced as it would have been using the Australian curriculum. I aspire to become an Ophthalmic Nurse one day.

Homeschooling can be and is successful. Why change what is already successful?