

Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

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Committee Secretary
Education, Employment, Training and Skills Committee
Parliament House
George Street
Brisbane Qld 4000

Dear Committee Secretary

I am writing to the Committee in relation to my concerns about the Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024. I am a Home Educating Parent who would be directly impacted by the proposed amendments to the Bill, though my wife does the bulk of the education during the day as I work full time. I am concerned about the impacts that these proposed changes will have on my family financially, and the wellbeing of my children. I do not support some of the proposed amendments that have been proposed in relation to Home Education.

As I have mentioned, my wife does the bulk of research and activities for home schooling as I work full time. I trust her fully in this regard and she has also made a submission to the committee outlining our concerns however I want to give you my point of view as a working father in a single income family of four.

Our decision to homeschool was driven out of covid and came about as we researched the methodologies used in the school system as it stands now. We came to respect other holistic methodologies that are focussed nurturing children and seeing each child as an individual rather than forcing a one size fits all solution to all of them.

I have a work colleague who described his year 11 child's schooling as being completely focused on ATAR exams. He said they almost exclusively spend days and days doing mock exams. It boggles my mind that a school would treat children this way so as to make themselves look better and therefore more appealing to prospective students. All for prestige and I assume funding, it's definitely not something I wish for my children.

I understand that there are alternative curriculums available, but these are financially unavailable to us. We are a single income family, we've taken great strides to minimise our daily spending, reduced our reliance on expensive items like cars and electricity. We have also considered moving to a dual income, but that brings with it extra costs like after school care, and ultimately severely diminished our time together as a family. My hope is that one of the holistic based programs can be made available for free.

Our current schooling from home addresses most of the concerns we have. We are quite happy for further oversight to ensure the well being of our children, but please be assured that we are doing our utmost best for our children. The single example given in the public briefing on the 18th of March, of a child in the home school system committing suicide is tragic. It is a single example and not representative of the children I see at home school group meet ups. In fact those children I see are amazing and diverse and give me hope for a future where children can be themselves and learn on their own terms.

I do also see the proposed requirement for having a plan ready as soon as registration is made as shortsighted. I hear of children having a hard time in school and having to move to home base schooling on short to no notice. I see that only a summary is required but even that can be difficult to write, especially at a time when there is probably great stress already.

I hope the proposed changes really have a motivation for providing the best for our children, rather than the best outcomes for schools. It's a real concern when schools are required to compete for funding and put themselves before the children.

Thank you for taking the time to read my letter and for considering my concerns.

Yours sincerely

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