

Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

Submission No: 1767
Submitted by: Phillip Sharp
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Submitter Comments:

To the Committee, Introduction I am a father of four children (age 10, 8, 5 and 2) who has been involved in homeschooling since our oldest child reached schooling age, approximately six years ago. Whist as of this year she is attending a private Christian school, two of my other children are currently being home educated and the fourth will be home educated once she is old enough.

Why do we homeschool? We homeschool our children as we value the time we spend together as a family. Keeping our children at home with us most of the time provides so many wonderful opportunities to create memories and learn through the daily rhythms of life. We live on a rural property and each day there are many activities taking place which our children get involved in. These range from feeding and caring for animals, tending gardens, repairing fences, vehicle maintenance among other things. Our son and second oldest child (currently 8 years old) is highly interested in STEM subjects, particularly electronics and machinery. Occupationally I work for a large Australian energy provider as a trainer for control room operators who operate gas compression and distribution infrastructure. I do this work part time and in a hybrid format which means I can work from home some of the working week. My son is able to be involved in the work I do as well as help out with many jobs around the property. For example a few days ago we changed the gearbox oil on our farm truck - my son was right there with me the whole time and helped me drain the old oil and pump the new oil in. He was studying the truck and asking many questions about gears, oil, engines, air brake systems, electrical systems among other things - I'm not sure where this experience fits in with the Australian Curriculum! My concerns with the proposed legislation: It is not clear what problem the legislation is trying to address, appears to be a very blunt "sledgehammer" approach to a non-existent problem. As a homeschooling family we prefer the flexibility to educate our children in a way that aligns with their interests and skill level rather than strict adherence to a "one size fits all" curriculum. Adding extra compliance burden onto home educators (who are already busy because they are home educating!) means more time spent (wasted) completing paperwork rather than educating our children. In conclusion I believe the proposed changes will not suit the majority of homeschooling families who are currently successfully delivering a quality education to their children. Kind Regards, Phillip Sharp Ph: [REDACTED]