

Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

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Submitted by: [REDACTED]
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Parliament House,

I am writing to you with my concerns regarding the proposed amendments to the education bill that has recently been presented to parliament. As a home educating parent, I do not support some of these changes that have been introduced and I am worried about the impact that they will have on my family and the homeschooling community.

I am particularly concerned about

How this directly affects my family. My child is 6 and has been enrolled into two different state schools for prep and grade 1. These two experiences left them traumatised as we began to recognise they weren't keeping up with peers and struggling immensely meeting curriculum standards. The first year they were placed into a classroom with a teacher who was grossly uneducated in what disabilities look like in young children. They were forced to participate with negative consequences if not behaving which led to anxiety from this teacher which carried to all teachers and a school environment as well – causing negative impact to his future in learning opportunities, as he simply could not carry out expectations.

During this time with support from medical team my child been diagnosed with Autism level 2, ADHD, Anxiety and presents these cognitive issues with severe emotional outbursts. We changed schools as we identified the school staff would not support to achieve learning.

We enrolled into a new school for grade 1 and held hope that this schooling staff would be able to cater, support and adjust so they could stay in school and achieve education milestones. He was unsuccessful to remain enrolled after being suspended multiple times and refusing to be in a classroom or with teachers and inclusion staff. I then after consulting school staff, registered for homeschooling as a final resort. I have had to stop working and eligible to receive carers payment from services Australia. It has been an incredibly hard time to feel isolated and unsure on who can support and their right to education, so, i had to be that person for him.

I'm concerned that the legislation has been introduced without proper consultation with current homeschooling families and I hope that you will take my feedback into consideration. For education to be inclusive of all students, I believe it is important to understand the reasoning behind the education decisions of the families who struggle the most to fit into mainstream education. Since homeschooling, I am slowly been able to get my child to be confident enough to engage with learning and giving them leadership to reach goals and strip back the fear of schooling systems. It is unfortunately a reality for many other families with similarities trying to advocate for their children. It is in my child's capacity currently to stay connected to homeschooling to have the best educational outcome. As I have had to be flexible and include many learning aids, including plenty of physical activity during learning while attending regular appointments with my child's care team and therapists.

Thank you for taking the time to listen to my concerns. It is my hope that, going forward, this legislation can suit the needs of all students across Queensland. Also, this could be avoided by ensuring all state schools have adequate and trained disability staff available.

I look forward to hearing your response about this important issue.