

7 July 2015

The Hon Di Farmer MP
Chair
Finance and Administration Committee
Parliament House
George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Email: fac@parliament.qld.gov.au

Dear Ms Farmer

Holidays and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015

I acknowledge your correspondence dated 11 June 2015 in which you advised of the introduction to Parliament of the *Holidays and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015* and invited a submission from the Queensland Catholic Education Commission (QCEC).

QCEC acts as a peak body for twenty-two Catholic school employing authorities who are autonomous in their responsibilities for operating Catholic schools within their respective jurisdictions. Accordingly I have consulted with these Catholic school authorities and the sixteen members of QCEC who include representatives of parents in Catholic schools.

Advice received indicates that the Catholic Schools support the retention of a public holiday in June and a public holiday in October (please refer to the attached submission).

It was agreed that placing a public holiday in May would compress the spread of holidays throughout the calendar year and would not be in the educational interest of Queensland school students.

I trust that the above advice is useful to your committee's deliberations on this matter.

Yours sincerely



Mandy Anderson
Acting Executive Director

Response to Holidays and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015

7 July 2015

Introduction:

The Queensland Catholic Education Commission (QCEC) thanks the Chair of the Finance and Administration Committee for the opportunity to provide comment on the Inquiry into the *Holidays and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015*.

QCEC is the peak body at state level for twenty-two Catholic school employing authorities with 147,000 students and 18,000 staff.

This Amendment Bill is the amendment of the *Holidays Act 1983* and a consequential amendment to the *Industrial Relations Act 1999* to ensure the legislation reflects the proposed dates of observance of Labor Day and the Queen's Birthday.

QCEC supports the retention of a public holiday in June and a public holiday in October.

It is acknowledged that the two public holidays where there is no uniformity or has linkages to religious or commemorative observation (Easter, Christmas, New Year or ANZAC day) is Labor Day and the Queen's Birthday holiday.

- Currently the Queen's Birthday holiday is on the same date across each State and Territory except for Western Australia.
- The Labor Day holiday is currently held on a number of dates across the country in different states and territories.

In previous submissions on this issue Catholic school authorities have supported a spread of holidays throughout the school year.

QCEC supports retaining the public holiday in June as this breaks up the compression of holidays in Semester One. Having public holidays close together is not helpful from an administrative perspective and continuity in schools. The maintaining of public holidays in June and October would retain national consistency in regards to public holidays with other States of Australia.

Consultation with the twenty two Catholic School Authorities resulted in the support to have the Queen's Birthday holiday in June and the Labor Day holiday in October, although QCEC's priority is with respect to the spread of public holiday times not with the designation of the holidays as Labor Day or Queen's Birthday.

Recommendation:

The Queensland Catholic Education Commission proposes the retention of the public holidays in June and October ensuring schools have an even spread of holidays over the calendar year. This would alleviate the cluster of public holidays in the earlier half of the year.

Conclusion:

QCEC supports the retention of a public holiday in June and a public holiday in October. It is not in the educational interests of Queensland students to have the holidays clustered together.

QCEC has appreciated the opportunity to provide these comments to the *Finance and Administration Committee* and would be pleased to provide further comment if required.



Mandy Anderson
Acting Executive Director