




Speech By
Hon. Grace Grace

MEMBER FOR MCCONNEL

Record of Proceedings, 24 February 2022

PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENT

Gender Identity and Sexuality, Discrimination

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (2.04 pm): It is clear they have nothing—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Order! I have not called you just yet. I do call the member for McConnel.

Ms GRACE: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. It is clear that those opposite have nothing new. The same old issues are coming out all of the time. Every student of every background is welcome in our schools. We are committed to providing safe, inclusive and supportive environments. That is exactly the kind of message we want LGBTIQ+ students to hear. That is why it was so distressing to hear about contracts sent out by Citipointe Christian College recently. It is completely unacceptable, and these views have no place in modern Australia.

As soon as I became aware, thanks to the member for Mansfield, I referred the matter directly to the non-state school accreditation board. It is still looking into this. I welcome the school's decision to withdraw the contract. Principal Mulherin has stood aside to reflect. They cannot undo the distress that has caused our LGBTIQ+ community and the Citipointe Christian College community.

In terms of the article tabled this morning in the House by the Attorney-General, I question the motive behind this contract. The timing is very suspicious, because the school clearly said in response to the statement of principal Mulherin—

It is central to our faith that being gay or transgender in no way diminishes a person's humanity or dignity in God's eyes ... we will not discriminate against any student because of their sexuality or gender identity.

You have to ask the question: if that is their practice, why did the school do this with these contracts at five o'clock, at the 11th hour, before students were due to start school online the next morning? It is clear that that article tabled this morning gives us the results, because it clearly became nothing more than a political stunt. We hear, lo and behold—and it has been brought to my attention—that there are clear links between this college and the LNP. The chair of the Citipointe board has been filling the LNP coffers for years—over \$100,000 in the past three years alone. It is interesting that they come in here today insinuating that donations linked to favours are being given. I wonder whether any of those donations were linked to the Prime Minister's inability to deliver to protect students and their gender identity? It is interesting. Were they doing the bidding of this college? If they thought that this stunt was going to deliver the religious discrimination bill, it clearly backfired somewhat.

The pastor who ran against the member for Mansfield, Janet Wishart, is now working in the Leader of the Opposition's office. I believe her fence was strewn with all of her corflutes at the time. We also have the member for Maroochydore who attends a Citipointe affiliated church. They went after the member for Chatsworth. Obviously the executive had to intervene. This smells of using these students for their own political gain. I say in this House that that is unacceptable and clearly disgraceful behaviour.