




Speech By  
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MEMBER FOR OODGEROO

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## ADJOURNMENT

### State Schools, Religious Instruction

 **Dr ROBINSON** (Oodgeroo—LNP) (7.12 pm): Easter is a very important spiritual time for millions of Australian Christians—we have just celebrated it. They celebrate the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Jesus brought the message of God’s love to all mankind—to all people; to you and me. This message of love, acceptance and forgiveness from God to us and us to each other is important and relevant whether you are 90 years old or nine years old.

Research shows that it is helpful for school-age children to have the opportunity to be taught spirituality, with a message of love, of acceptance. That is why it is important that religious instruction continue to be offered as part of the curriculum in state schools. I want to thank all of the religious instruction teachers in the schools of the Cleveland district and wider Redlands coast. They do a great act of service for the community when they teach and model good values to children.

Reverend David Baker and the Venerable Tseten are co-chairs of the multifaiths RI network. I table an article they have provided and two Harvard studies that support RI continuing to be offered and the importance of it in state school curriculum.

*Tabled paper:* Article from Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, dated 13 September 2018, titled ‘Religious upbringing linked to better health and well-being during early adulthood’ [502](#).

*Tabled paper:* Article from the *Harvard Gazette*, dated 12 July 2022, titled ‘Spirituality linked with better health outcomes, patient care’ [503](#).

*Tabled paper:* Media statement, dated 27 February 2023, by Co-chairs, Multi Faiths RI Network, Rev. David Baker and Venerable Tseten, regarding religious instruction [504](#).

An opt-in RI program allows parents and caregivers whose children go to state schools some choice of faith in their child’s education. RI is popular. Parents of 200,000 students in over 600 state schools opt their children into RI. RI supports the learning outcomes of the national curriculum, social cohesion and a well-rounded education, among other things—all squeezed into a short 30 minutes each week. RI reflects a multicultural, multifaith Queensland. It supports multicultural communities in our state schools. There is Christian, Jewish, Islamic, Buddhist, Greek Orthodox, Hindu, Sikh, First Nations yarning circle RI, among others. RI supports values-based education, including the key values of care, compassion, respect and responsibility as outlined in the national framework for values education. RI provides important psychological benefits to students’ mental health and wellbeing, according to Harvard University research. They talk about RI and general religious education. RI in Queensland is current and relevant. It is academically reviewed regularly, modernised and kept relevant.

In conclusion, I would like to encourage the education minister to continue to hold the line against the current attacks on RI, on faith, from those who sometimes do not understand faith or its value to the millions of Australians who hold it. Can I encourage the minister to continue to hold the line and keep RI.