



Speech By  
**Shane Knuth**


**MEMBER FOR HILL**

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Record of Proceedings, 16 April 2024

## **ADJOURNMENT**

### **Anti-Discrimination Act**

 **Mr KNUTH** (Hill—KAP) (7.22 pm): I rise tonight to warn the government and all members of the proposed changes to the Queensland Anti-Discrimination Act through the proposed anti-discrimination bill 2024. These changes represent an alarming and direct assault on religion-based schools. This draft legislation, if enacted, would not only undermine fundamental human rights but also betray all faith-based communities that enrich our society.

Australia, as a signatory to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, has affirmed religious freedom as one of the most fundamental human rights, yet the proposed anti-discrimination legislation fails to uphold this sacred principle. These proposed changes will blatantly contravene article 18.4 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which recognises the rights of parents to ensure the faith and moral education of their children according to their own beliefs, not the government's belief. It is unacceptable that religious institutions may be forced into compromising their core values which are central to an orthodox interpretation of their scriptures.

Imagine being told you can read and believe the Bible, but you are forbidden from living according to its teachings because they are deemed by the government to be offensive. This prospect enrages me and our religious institutions. This proposed bill is both ideological and discriminatory, threatening the freedom of millions who hold steadfast to religious convictions and seek to pass these values onto their children. If this disgraceful legislation is passed, the very existence of religion-based schools will be in danger, placing an immense strain on an already burdened state school system where overcrowded classrooms and staff shortages have become the norm. Just last week an alarming report surfaced of teachers in Queensland resigning in droves, with nearly 12½ thousand leaving since 2020. This drastic decline in the teaching workforce coinciding with rising student numbers signals a looming crisis. I have no doubt the government will avoid debate on the critical issue before the upcoming election in October but honourable members should not be fooled by this tactic. If re-elected, they will fast-track this legislation.

I encourage all Queenslanders to raise their voices now and contact their local member to demand a commitment to stand against this blatant assault on religious freedoms.