

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, 29 January 2018 1:50 PM
To: Policy AGD
Subject: Modernisation of the Anti-Discrimination Act" discussion paper

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Ms Sarah Witham;

I am writing in regards to the "Modernisation of the Anti-Discrimination Act" discussion paper.

I have several concerns about the proposed changes. I value the freedom of speech and religious expression in this country. I want to see religious education continue in schools and for religious leaders to be able to teach without fear of charges of vilification. I also feel it is paramount for religious institutions to be able to hire staff based on the potential employee's faith and values.

Much of the Act and the paper with modernisation proposals are sound. My specific concerns are:

Question 4: Should vilification provisions be included in the act? Should vilification be prohibited for attributes other than the basis of race, such as disability, sexual orientation, religious belief, gender identity or intersex status?

No. The terms offend and insult are too subjective and will lead to over litigation. Freedom of speech should be protected. Honest respectful discussion of differing views should be allowed to take place that doesn't lead to 'harassment, psychological distress, hurt, anger and anxiety' as the paper claims.

Questions 14: Should any exemptions for religious or cultural bodies be removed?

No. Freedom of religion should be protected. Freedom of choice for parents of children at religious schools should also be upheld.

Questions 20: Should definitions of "man" and "woman" be repealed?

Question 21: Should the term "parenthood" be replaced with "carer responsibilities"?

Language that include these biological distinctives is important, and should be used consistently in the Act. Instead of replacing parenthood, it should be upheld, and the term carer introduced as a separate notion.

Regards,

[REDACTED]