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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, 16 October 2017 1:25 PM
To: Tony Sievers <Tony.Sievers@nt.gov.au>; Electorate Brennan <Electorate.Brennan@nt.gov.au>
Subject: Anti-Discrimination Discussion Paper

Dear Mr. Tony Sievers,

I am writing to you in regards to the Discussion Paper on the Modernisation of the Anti-Discrimination Act dated September 2017.

I write to you as a concerned resident of the Palmerston community. I also write to you as it is the Labor party of which you are a sitting member that introduced this Discussion Paper.

I am really concerned about many areas that have been proposed by the Labour Government to be Modernised in the Anti-Discrimination Act.

Firstly I am concerned about who has asked for these changes to be made? I do not remember when Labor was voted in did it promise to make changes to the Anti-Discrimination Act. I do not recall people pushing for changes to be made to this Anti-Discrimination Act. I believe that many of the proposed changes are extreme and I do not agree with them. I also know that many other Territorians also hold these views. Did all the Labour members and current sitting MLA's in Darwin have a meeting to discuss this Discussion Paper? I am concerned about how these changes will affect our lives in the Territory.

I am concerned about the Modernisation reforms and disagree with proposed changes to gender identity, Vilification, and Removing Content that enshrines Discrimination: Religious Exemptions and repealing the definition of 'man,' and 'woman.' I will also be making a submission to the Northern Territory Justice Department which will go into more detail about the reasons why I disagree with many of the changes proposed in this Discussion Paper dated September 2017.

As a person who lives in the Territory I believe that through this Discussion Paper the Government is seeking to remove all Religious Freedoms in one Discussion Paper and forcing people to only exercise their freedom of speech in their own homes, (in private; for example their own home- Discussion Paper p. 11) just in case somebody feels that they have been vilified because someone else chose to say something in public.

Does the Northern Territory Government not recognise the positive contributions to the education of Territory children over many years that Independent Religious Schools have made. Has the Northern Territory Government forgotten this and forgotten the efforts of parents, teachers, principals and churches over many years to establish these schools. These Religious schools are seeking to teach children Christian values, values by which the Australian Constitution was founded upon. I think the Northern Territory Government need to consider what they are really proposing here. In choosing to become more inclusive I think the Government is choosing to exclude those Territorians with religious beliefs and the freedom that those Territorians have to practice their faith or religion within a Christian School or a Church environment.

If the Northern Territory Government would like people to stay in the Northern Territory maybe it needs to remember each of these Territorians and the diversity they bring to the Territory. It might need to consider whether taking away their freedoms to free speech and freedom to practise their religion. I realise that, as a law abiding citizen, we live under the law of the land and as an Australian citizen we have to keep certain laws in order for there to be protection and peace for all. I also know that many people have made Australia their home because they have escaped persecution from other countries because of their religion and they have the freedom to practise their religion here. If these changes are made to the Discrimination Act then those people will not want to settle in the Territory because their religious freedoms have been taken away. The next step the Government will be proposing is what can or cannot be taught in a Mosque or church.

I send you this email to let you know that many (not all) of these proposed changes are extreme and the repercussions of many of the changes that are included in the paper have not truly been thought through.

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I do know the few people who will benefit from some of these Modernisations to the Anti -Discrimination Act will be Lawyers, and Law Firms and the Justice Department whose work will increase five-fold because of many Cultural and Religious and Organisations Schools seeking exemptions from these proposed changes. I think the Justice Department has also underestimated the changes to Vilification will most likely fill the law courts with many unnecessary cases because many more people or Organisations may be taking offence by what has been said by someone else to them. Maybe this money could be better spent on educating people on; How to treat others how you want to be treated, Respecting others views and opinions(not necessarily agreeing but respecting), Accepting responsibility for your actions, and Learning to say sorry...then I forgive you....without going to court. I believe the Northern Territory Government has other areas where tax-payers money could be better spent.

Thank you for your time,

Yours Sincerely,

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