



# Archbishop of Sydney

13 March 2019

The Hon Scott Morrison MP  
Prime Minister of Australia  
Via email:

Dear Mr Morrison,

I am writing to you as a consequence of the recent Senate Inquiry into the proposed amendments to the *Sex Discrimination Amendment (Removing Discrimination Against Students) Bill 2018*, and in particular because of the divergent positions expressed in the majority report and the two minority reports from Labor and the Greens. The key points of difference are whether the Sex Discrimination Act should protect the right of a religious school to teach and operate in accordance with its doctrines, tenets and beliefs, and to preference the employment of staff who support the religious ethos of the school.

Because of the continuing uncertainty about these matters, I am writing to the leaders of political parties, requesting written answers to the following questions. Once we have collated your response with that of other parties, we plan to share this information within faith communities.

Should your party continue to be in government after the next election:

1. Will it introduce legislation that will remove the current exemptions in s.38 of the SDA in relation to both students and teachers?
2. Will it maintain the existing exemptions in s.21(3) that allow single-sex schools to enrol students of the one sex?
3. Is it the policy of your party that a faith-based school should be permitted to enrol and treat a student on the basis of their biological sex rather than their gender identity? For example, use of gendered pronouns, toilet facilities and school uniform.
4. Does it commit to introduce and support legislation that guarantees the right of faith-based schools to teach in accordance with their doctrines, tenets and beliefs? For example, teaching on traditional marriage, gender and sexuality.
5. Does it commit to introduce and support legislation to make it explicit that it is "reasonable" for a faith-based school to set rules and policies, and enforce these rules and policies within its student body and staff, in accordance with its doctrines, tenets and beliefs?
6. Does it commit to a positive protection in legislation that will allow a faith-based school to be able to employ staff who adhere to, or act in accordance with, the religious beliefs of that faith?

We respectfully request that you provide responses to these questions by Monday the 25th of March.

Grace and peace

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Glenn'.

Glenn N Davies  
Archbishop of Sydney