



From: [Redacted]
Sent: Monday, 29 January 2018 10:03 PM
To: Policy AGD
Subject: Submission to the review of the Anti-discrimination Act

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

To whom it may concern,

I am writing in response to the proposed changes to the Anti-discrimination Act. I would like to address question 15, the proposal to remove exemptions for religious bodies in the areas of education and accommodation. The proposed changes would completely undermine the key purpose of faith based education, to provide an education space that specifically caters for those in the community that hold that faith. To remove protections over those that are employed and enrolled would mean these education settings would no longer be able to promote their unique beliefs or values as those employed would not necessarily hold to these beliefs or values. For the thousands of years that people have populated the earth, diverse expressions of faith and values have co-existed in harmony until there has been legislation or oppression that would support only one stream of view. History compels us to maintain a society that allows for unique views and faith, as long as they are respectfully communicated. The solution is not to destroy the structures or opportunities for the unique expression of the diverse range of faiths held by those that call The Territory home.

Access to accommodation provided by religious bodies and access to religious sites should likewise remain protected. Would we consider it lawful for a group that has no respect or understanding of our First Nation peoples sacred sites to come and go as they please, committing whatever acts they chose? The acts may be reasonable in the eyes of the visitors but would result in desecration in the eyes of the traditional custodians, causing great distress to that community. Religious sites and settings are often established to provide a unique opportunity for service to be provided under the values and understandings of that faith. There are locations, services and accommodation that provide for general access by the community. Removing the exemption for religious bodies to serve the community in their unique capacity, denies those members of the community that desire, that need those particular services. Have we come so far in celebrating our First Nation people's culture and spiritual traditions to now turn around and undermine the diverse expression of faith groups across the Territory?

I remain your sincerely,

