

MEDIA RELEASE



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The Last Parliament Let Down People of Faith, This Parliament Must Do Better

Today's [announcement](#) of a delay in the Australian Law Reform Commission (ALRC) into exemptions for faith-based schools until the end of the year will create apprehension amongst people of faith across Australia.

The last Parliament failed to pass legislation which would have:

- protected people of faith against discrimination for the first time nationally,
- addressed the unfounded, but real, fears of LGBT students that they would be expelled from faith-based schools, and
- provided certainty around the operations and staff of faith-based schools for teachers and school leaders.

'While the extension of the ALRC process is welcomed, and a strong indication that the Consultation Paper released in was not fit for purpose, people of faith across Australia will have **a clear sense of déjà vu** following this announcement', said Christian Schools Australia Director of Public Policy, Mark Spencer.

'The **last Parliament failed** to deliver on a legislative package to protect people of faith and address student concern', he said, 'with the politics of a looming election overshadowing the commitment to fundamental freedoms'.

'With rumours of a Federal election next year, **people of faith are concerned that once again politics will get in the way**'.

'We **appreciated the statements by the Prime Minister and Attorney-General** before the last election committing an Albanese government to resolve these issues within this term of Government.'

'On behalf of people of faith across Australia, but particularly those in our school communities, as well as the students within our schools, we are calling on the Government to **commence public consultations on a Religious Discrimination Bill while the ALRC is concluding its work**'.

'The *Religious Discrimination Bill 2022* as passed by the House of Representatives provides an obvious model for the Government to adopt', Mr Spencer said, 'and doing so will almost certainly mean that we **have these issues resolved this year**'.

'Protections against discrimination for people of faith are **long overdue**, and LGBT students should not have to live with the **fear whipped up by activists**. **The time for action on these issues is now**'.

ENDS

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About Christian Schools Australia

Christian Schools Australia (CSA) is the largest association of Christian schools in the country and has member schools educating around 75,000 students and employing more than 11,000 staff at more than 180 locations across Australia. CSA member schools provide high quality education within an authentic Christian learning community.