



23 September 2024

## Open Letter to Members of Parliament – South Australian Legislative Council

Re: Conversion Practices Prohibition Bill 2024

We write to you with grave concerns about the *Conversion Practices Prohibition Bill 2024* due to be debated in your house as early as this week.

At Christians Schools Australia, our member schools believe in providing quality, Christ-centred education to our students. We are the largest association of Christian schools in the country providing support for the delivery of educational excellence. Our member schools educate over 86,000 students and employ over 13,500 staff at more than 200 locations across Australia. In South Australia, we educate over 10,000 students at almost 30 locations. This is a significant constituency of staff, parents and students.

We urge you to *vote against this bill* which has not had sufficient public scrutiny, and which will have a potentially damaging effect on our ability to operate as truly local, independent Christian schools. We are concerned about the unintended consequences within this bill, and raise the following concerns in particular:

- There is a lack of clarity on the role of teachers within this legislation. If teachers are not equated with parents within the bill, we are concerned that individual conversations with students who are struggling with genuine gender confusion will no longer be protected conversations we can have in good faith.
- The situation where a student can give consent for counselling or a conversation, then withdraw or negate this consent at any stage in the future, has the potential to break down trust within our schools and potentially limit our ability to provide genuine assistance to students when they ask for it.
- The religious exemptions appear to apply only in general terms, and not to individual or small group conversations within schools. For example, while a school's Student Code of Conduct may hold a position in line with our biblical worldview in regard to sexuality, our schools will be potentially limited in their ability to provide individual support for students to aid them in compliance with such a Code.
- The bill appears to promote an 'affirmation only' approach to conversations about gender and sexuality. Does this mean that our schools will not be protected for expressing a biblical viewpoint of sexuality which may be in direct contradiction to taking an 'affirmative approach'?

We would appreciate our questions being asked during the debate and for your clear opposition to this bill.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us at the emails and phone number below.

Yours faithfully

Dr Rachel Carling  
Acting Director of Public Policy  
0438 293 340

Dr Daniel Pampuch  
Chief Executive Officer

**Christian Schools Australia Limited**

National Office

Suite 14, Level 1, Manuka Arcade, 22-30 Franklin St, Manuka ACT

PO Box 3069, Manuka ACT 2603

ACN 092 580 124 | [csa@csa.edu.au](mailto:csa@csa.edu.au) | [csa.edu.au](http://csa.edu.au) | +61 2 6257 7989