

## ALRC EXTENSION CONFIRMS CHRISTIAN SCHOOL CONCERNS

20 APRIL 2023

The announcement today by the Hon Mark Dreyfus KC MP that he has agreed to an extension for the reporting date for the Australian Law Reform Commission's (ALRC) review of religious exemptions for educational institutions comes as no surprise to Christian schools.

"We welcome the Government's decision to provide an extension to the ALRC. It confirms our view that the ALRC's consultation paper was a big 'fail' and the ALRC needs to go back to the drawing board to start from scratch", said Vanessa Cheng, Executive Officer of AACCS.

"Many submissions from faith groups raised significant concerns about the radical set of recommendations put forward which did not adequately address the Government's own Terms of Reference" she said, "and as all teachers know, when the homework task is not right, extensions must be given".

"The extension confirms our significant concerns about the initial consultation paper which went far beyond the Government's Terms of Reference and failed to protect Christian and other faith schools' ability to employ staff of the same faith".

"We hope the ALRC takes the time to conduct a much more rigorous analysis of the international law and provide fairer set of recommendations to Government," said Ms Cheng.

"The ALRC has a lot of work to do to get this right. We hope the extension of time allows it to deliver a much more balanced set of recommendations which will protect the personal rights of staff and students while also allowing the freedom of religious schools to build a 'community of faith'."

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