

ACT GOVERNMENT TO JAIL PARENTS WITH 'GAY CONVERSION' LAWS

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The ACT Government is planning to pass a dangerous piece of legislation this week called the *Sexuality and Gender Identity Conversion Practices Bill 2020* that could result in jail time for parents, teachers and health professionals who question children wanting to change their biological gender.

“Canberrans need to see this proposed law for what it is: an outrageous attack on the rights of parents to guide, or even question, their children in accordance with their own values about sexuality and gender,” said Vanessa Cheng, Executive Officer of the Australian Association of Christian Schools.

This ideologically driven ban will only allow parents, teachers and health professionals one course of action: to agree with the child and support their choices as they explore questions about their sexuality and gender or else face up to 12 months in jail.

“The ACT Government would have Canberrans believe that abhorrent coercive ‘gay conversion’ practices of the past are in widespread use in ACT’s schools and churches today, but this is simply not true,” said Vanessa.

The ACT Government indicated in a letter to a range of organisations last month said that they “look forward to further consultation with you and your community once legislation has been introduced into the ACT Legislative Assembly”. No such consultation will be possible because the bill was introduced last Thursday and is expected to be debated this week.

“These are very serious concerns our parents have about the health and safety of their children. Why is the ACT Government rushing through such significant legalisation in the second last day of sitting before the election without properly consulting with us?”

Vanessa Cheng said, “a law which requires a parent, teacher or counsellor to agree with a student who feels like they want to change their gender, regardless of their age or personal circumstances, is dangerous and unjustified.”

“For children presenting with gender dysphoria, a ‘watchful waiting’ approach remains a respected pastoral care method. Parents and teachers must not be intimidated by the fear of criminal action for trying to guide children through these lifelong decisions about their identity with wisdom, love and respect.”

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