

**Submission
No 68**

**INQUIRY INTO EDUCATION AMENDMENT (ETHICS
CLASSES REPEAL) BILL 2011**

Name: Mr Bart van Deurzen

Date received: 11/12/2011

The Director
General Purpose Standing Committee No. 2
Parliament House
Macquarie St
Sydney NSW 2000
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Sydney, 11/12/2011

Re: investigation of ethics classes

Dear Sir/Madam,

I welcome the investigation of ethics classes because I feel they are a crucial element for maintaining a constructive society. However, I am concerned that only these classes are being scrutinised when the alternatives are not. Indeed, how can the ethics classes be judged without a point of reference. All these classes require equal scrutiny.

Furthermore, I find it extremely concerning that the goal of the investigation is not how to improve classes but whether to repeal the relevant law or not. Clearly this investigation is not motivated by a desire for quality education but by the religious agenda of the Christian Democratic Party.

Our society is built on the concept of freedom. But of course our freedom is limited when it starts to impact on other peoples freedom. It is quite clear that the respect for peoples freedom not to take part in a particular religious education is at stake here. In fact, I consider it unethical what is being attempted.

Religion's grasp on society has been waning for quite some time now. People who are raised with religious beliefs often loose these as they grow up. The danger is that concepts of ethics are discarded along with these beliefs when in fact there is a basis for ethical behaviour outside of religion. I have great hopes for an increased place for ethics in society if education can make clearer that ethics are not just tied to religious beliefs.

I will be following developments with interest.

Yours sincerely,

Bart van Deurzen