

Submission
No 57

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

Name: Ms Anne Twomey

Date received: 20/12/2011

Partially Confidential

The Director,
General Purpose Standing Committee No 2
Legislative Council
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
Sydney, NSW, 2000

Dear Sir or Madam

Submission to the Inquiry into the *Education Amendment (Ethics) Act 2010*

I wish to make the following submission to the Committee's Inquiry. I am a practising Catholic and have previously served as a Special Religious Education teacher for Catholic students at [redacted] / My son continues to attend Catholic scripture classes – now at

I have a strong view that the *Education Amendment (Ethics) Act 2010* (NSW) should not be repealed and that children in State public schools should have the opportunity of attending ethics classes if their parents so approve. In my view it would be morally wrong to deny children the opportunity to study ethics simply because one or more religious groups seek to protect their own classes from competition. We would not contemplate allowing one religious group to exclude the teaching of scripture by other religions in State schools. Nor should we contemplate excluding ethics classes from being given to those children whose parents do not wish them to join any of the other special religious classes that are being offered in the school.

The most appropriate way of dealing with competition in the commercial world is not to ban it or undermine it, but to improve the value of one's own product. In terms of special religious education, this means that each religion offering classes in schools ought to review its curriculum and improve the quality of its teaching to ensure that it is giving the highest quality religious education to children in public schools. This can only be to the advantage of all and ought to be encouraged.

In my view the *Education Amendment (Ethics) Act 2010* (NSW) should not be repealed.

Yours sincerely,

Anne Twomey