

**FAITH-BASED SCHOOLS**

*Petition*

**HON NICK GOIRAN (South Metropolitan)** [2.02 pm]: I present an e-petition containing 10 234 signatures couched in the following terms —

To the President and Members of the Legislative Council of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled. We the undersigned ...

1. Affirm that parents have the primary responsibility for the education of their children and governments have an important role to facilitate that parental responsibility.
2. Support the right of parents to choose what school their child attends.
3. Recognise:
  - a. the important role that faith-based schools play in educating children consistent with the faith and values of their parents; and
  - b. that some faith-based schools have been established to serve a particular faith community.
4. Emphasise that in order for faith-based schools to properly and completely fulfill their role, it is essential they retain the right to:
  - a. fill all staffing positions, with staff whose faith and values are consistent with the stated faith and values of the school which have been expressly chosen by the parents of enrolled children; and
  - b. require families to be active members of that faith community as a condition of enrollment in the school.
5. Acknowledge that those who disagree with these essential components of faith-based education are free to send their children to a different school of their choice.
6. Remind Members of Parliament that Australia is a signatory to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights which at Article 18(4) protects ‘the liberty of parents ... to ensure the religious and moral education of their children’.
7. Are concerned that some of the content of the Law Reform Commission’s Review of the Equal Opportunity Act 1984 fails to properly recognise this right of parents and role of faith-based schools.
8. Call on the Western Australian Government to respect this right of parents and role of faith-based schools and ensure that any changes to legislation strengthen that right and role and refrain from any watering down of these essential protections.

And your petitioners as in duty bound, will ever pray.

[See paper 1903.]