

Hi,

I am writing against the proposal of Australian Government Productivity Commission that withdraw DGR status from “charities that have DGR status for school building funds or to provide religious education in government schools”. This is an action deny the valuable contribution of church or faith community to Australia society.

As a church pastor, I also volunteer with a group of Christians to serve in St George hospital as a chaplain. I spend half day every week there. Our team of volunteer chaplains visit patients, listen and care for them. Most of the chaplains serve the society without pay. They are not to preach over them religious thoughts but simply to love people. The society needs people to listen and many patients appreciate our work.

Similarly, many volunteer Christians serve in the government primary school by teaching the scripture class. They nurture the moral development of school students. The SRE teachers also bring crucial contribution to the mental health, community building of young people. The SRE teachers promote multiculturalism, social acceptance and reduce the risk of radicalization.

Religious organisations play an important role in many people’s lives and communities across Australia. The faith-based education is in growing demand. The waiting time to enter a Christian school is measured by months or years. Christian schools are popular amongst many parents. We need more building of Christian school. Therefore, I fully support the development of religious school especially the continuation of DGR status of school building funds or to provide religious education in government schools. Please don’t go the course of removing DGR status from religious school. It only brings harm to Australian society.

Regards

Rev Chor Tim Chan