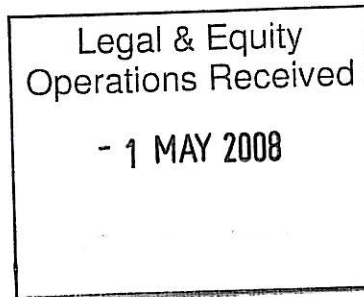


17th April 2008

The Exceptions Review
Department of Justice
Level 24, 121 Exhibition Street
MELBOURNE 3000



Dear Sir/Madam,

I understand that the Exceptions Review's assessment of the Equal Opportunity 1995 is a consequence of the Government's adoption of the Charter of Rights and Responsibilities. I specifically request that the Review maintain the exemptions available to religious organizations under Sections 75, 76 and 77 of that Act.

My reasons for seeking the retention of these exemptions pertain to the understanding that:

- In the same way that all employers have the right to choose job applicants who are suited to the mores and culture of their organization, Christian schools and religious institutions ought have the freedom to select applicants who in all respects mirror, endorse and uphold the principles and values for which they stand.
- The use of the Charter of Rights to remove these exceptions will effectively serve to undermine the religious freedoms of Christians and Christian institutions and as such will make a travesty of those freedoms which are meant to be preserved by the Charter with the words: *"the freedom to his or her religion or belief in worship, observance, practice and teaching, either individually or as part of a community in public or private"* (Section 14).

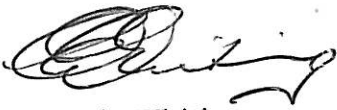
Furthermore I would ask the Exceptions Review to note that for the Christian moral decisions are a matter of faith and obedience based on the belief that the Bible reveals the rule of life for godliness and general equity. There is a sense in which the secularist state holds that referring to God as the measure of absolute principles in the public square is questionable. Further it also seems to maintain that any religiously motivated action is unacceptable in the public square. In essence this amounts to the promotion of a type of atheism as the unofficial state religion. Thus the secularist state insists that anyone contributing to political

discussion or acting in the public domain ought to act as if there is no God, or if there is a God, that this ought to have no bearing whatsoever upon their choices and actions.

These are not religiously neutral positions. Both are, in fact, variants of atheism.

To this end I would ask the Exceptions Review to preserve the current exemptions without itself being drawn into the question of whether it is promulgating a religious view.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Chris Whiting".

Chris Whiting
Senior Pastor