Dear Attorney General Christian Porter,

I would like to voice my following concern in the Religious Discrimination Bill 2019 Draft,

1. It is common sense that only a man and a woman can bear children, but not same-sex couples, they only can adopt children. It proves that it is precious to preserve the traditional marriage value to our next generation. Our nation needs to have more human resources through traditional marriage but not same-sex marriage.

2. Everyone shall have the right of freedom of speech, thought, conscience and religion, including freedom to have or to adopt a religion or belief of one’s choice. This bill does not protect parents who are prime educator of their children to ensure their education conforms with their belief. This right is protected by the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). Therefore, this bill must include protection of parents’ right if the parents want the right to withdraw their children from classes that they may object to, such as ‘Safe School Programme’ and subjects in transgenderism and homosexuality.

3. There is uncertain protection for those large company (turnover more than $50 million) employees who express religious beliefs in social media/other public spaces outside of work can be penalised/fired. And there is no protection for smaller company employees who express their personal beliefs in social media or other public spaces work may be penalised. I believe freedom of expression of religious belief of any employee should be brought into line with international human rights law, the ICCPR of which Australia is a signatory, and it should not be dependent on how much the employer earns.

4. The bill should say that it is religious discrimination to force a doctor and health care workers to act against their conscience, for example, in providing services they cannot agree with such as abortion and euthanasia.

5. Religious schools should have the right to employ teachers with the same faith. Otherwise, it is against the teaching of the religion, which is contradictory to their beliefs.

6. I believe statement of religious belief should not be prohibited on the basis that they “vilify”. This word has no clear legal meaning. So this bill can still enable people to sue someone if they claim being vilified by some religious statement, like the case of Catholic Archbishop Julian Porteous being dragged to the discrimination tribunal for simply distributing pastoral letter to his congregation about the biblical meaning of marriage. I would like to ask for protection of our religious statement in social media or public spaces.

7. If the state we live in has a different law, this federal law will not override it. We need a law that protects everyone similarly across the nation.

In conclusion, this bill needs more work. Please include full provision for parents’ rights and for federal laws that protects everyone across the nation. Thank you.