Religious Discrimination Bill – Exposure Draft

To Whom It May Concern,

We wish to express our concern regarding certain sections of the draft Religious Discrimination Bill, 2019. Mount Tamborine Convention (MTC) trading as Mount Tamborine Conference Centre, is registered as a charity with the ACNC, a not-for-profit and holder of Letters Patent granted under the Religious Educational and Charitable Institutions Act 1861(Qld).

The Foundational Object of MTC is to advance religion - to give teaching from the Bible for the deepening of the spiritual life of the believer leading to a victorious experience and an effective Christian witness.

Our core values are:
1. Promoting gospel-centred Biblical teaching and its power to transform lives into holy obedient disciples of Jesus.
2. Encouraging a deepening commitment to ministry, and support of the Christian missionary mandate.
3. Reflecting the grace of God through demonstrating the love and grace of Christ to all.
4. Displaying Christian unity with all who are in Christ Jesus.
5. Providing an environment that promotes the deepening of relationship with both God and people.

MTC engages in commercial activities not contradictory to a religious goal by hiring our facility to like minded Christian groups that align with our statement of faith. One of the primary services that MTC provides to the wider community is a place for church retreats to be held. The fact that this includes a commercial transaction does not take away from the primary purpose of the event. MTC provides resources and services to the disadvantaged, the needy, and the marginalised in society.

MTC has been funded by Christian donors for the purposes of Christian aligned groups utilising the site. Our accommodation and camping area is privately owned, and is not available to the general public. Accommodation and camping is available only as part of organised conferences and group bookings.

It seems highly discriminatory to exclude entities such as us from this legislation just because we need to charge a fee for the services we render. As incurred costs (wages, utility charges, food, depreciation, etc) there is no other alternative but to charge a fee. Any profit generated is reinvested to ensure future generations benefit from the same experiences.

MTC believes the Religious Discrimination Bill 2019 will cause the organisation significant issues by having to consider giving access to groups that do not align with our statement of faith.

MTC considers section 10 of the draft bill easily resolved by rethinking the reference to commercial activities, allowing religious organisations to be included.

Whilst we congratulate the government of the desire to provide clarify around this issue, we strongly believe that changes as listed above need to be strongly considered in order to provide for an outcome welcomed by all.

Sincerely,
Ross Dinnar - CEO