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1. Has the Act reduced or stopped change or suppression practices? Describe any impact you think the Act has had on the occurrence or the nature of change or suppression practices.

Does it in fact do the opposite where only gender fluid ideology is promoted and affirmed... thereby working to 'convert' heterosexual people, including children in daycare and school settings to believe their gender IS fluid and is not based on sex which is a biological reality that is DETERMINED AT CONCEPTION. Even people who are intersex have their sex determined at conception and intersex and they have a mix of male or female characteristics not a whole range of genders. Intersex people should not be used as pawns in an argument to justify gender ideology. Every single nucleated cell is sexed.

2. To what extent do you think the community is aware of and understands: a. the Act and how it works b. what change or suppression practices are and c. the harm caused by change or suppression practices

I think large sections of the community are largely unaware. The media and government organisations reports this information in a biased way.

4. How clear is the Act's definition of what is and what is not a change or suppression practice? If further clarity is needed, what forms of clarification would be most helpful?

The Act's definition of change or suppression practices defaults to an affirmation-only approach, which privileges one clinical approach over others and fails to provide a genuinely neutral framework for supporting individuals with gender dysphoria. This provision, combined with the carve-out for practices that encourage or promote gender transition, effectively protects affirmation-only approaches while leaving non-affirmation approaches exposed to liability, raising serious concerns about the intrusion of the state into the content of religious doctrine and the freedom of clinicians to provide alternative perspectives. By holding to an 'affirmation-only' approach the Act is in itself a conversion practice.

5. How clear is the exclusion for health service providers? If further clarity is needed, how could this best be achieved?

The explicit example in the Act that psychotherapy is a prohibited suppression activity unless it falls within the exemption creates a chilling effect on clinical practice, as it may deter practitioners from providing evidence-based care due to fear of prosecution. This lack of clarity undermines the confidence of practitioners with non-affirming clinical views, who cannot be certain that their ordinary professional practice is protected, even where it is grounded in evidence and conducted with informed consent. Furthermore, clinicians with faith-based perspectives on gender are left uncertain about the scope of the health services exclusion, as it appears that their clinical approach may be deemed non-exempt if informed by religious belief.

6. Is greater clarity needed about how people of faith can hold and express their beliefs to support clear understanding and compliance with the Act? What forms of clarification would be most helpful?

The Victorian Law Reform Commission's consultation on the Change or Suppression (Conversion) Practices Prohibition Act 2021 raises significant concerns regarding the Act's impact on religious freedom and individual autonomy. Unlike the NSW Bill, the Act fails to provide examples of faith-based practices that will not constitute a change or suppression practice, instead offering only a caution that such practices may contravene the Act. This extraordinary intrusion into both religious freedom and individual autonomy has a serious chilling effect on religious communities, leaving pastors and faith leaders uncertain as to whether ordinary pastoral care, prayer, or scripture-based counsel will expose them to liability.

7. How effective are VEOHRC's awareness and education materials on change or suppression practices? What improvements, if any, could help strengthen community understanding and compliance?

The Victorian Law Reform Commission's consultation process is fundamentally flawed, as it is premised on the assumption that the Change or Suppression (Conversion) Practices Prohibition Act 2021 is sound legislation in need of minor refinement, rather than a deeply problematic law that warrants critical examination. This assumption undermines the integrity of the consultation, as it precludes a genuinely balanced and evidence-based consideration of the Act's provisions and their far-reaching consequences.

9. Are there changes that could help support VEOHRC to carry out its functions or improve the effectiveness of the civil response scheme? If so, please describe any changes.

The Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission's (VEOHRC) guidance materials on the Change or Suppression (Conversion) Practices Prohibition Act 2021 require scrutiny. Such materials should not be permitted to stand as authoritative guidance under the Act, as they may be perceived as promoting a particular ideology rather than providing balanced information. The Cass Review, the most comprehensive independent review of gender medicine for children and young people ever conducted, has shed significant light on the complexities surrounding this issue. VEOHRC should engage with the findings of the Cass Review to ensure that its guidance materials reflect the latest evidence and research. By doing so, VEOHRC can provide guidance that is more comprehensive and nuanced.

12. Do existing avenues for redress adequately meet the needs of victim-survivors of change or suppression practices? Are there gaps, harms or barriers that require an additional or separate redress mechanism?

How are the needs of de-transitioners who were offered an affirmation only model of care, education and bias in public institutions and media affected? Some of them have literally had double mastectomies under the age of 18 or have taken life and fertility altering medications as minors. How will they be supported?

13. Should a civil cause of action be introduced under the Act? What distinct purpose would it serve compared to existing pathways?

The introduction of a civil cause of action under the Change or Suppression (Conversion) Practices Prohibition Act 2021 is a concerning development that threatens to have far-reaching and devastating consequences for faith communities. Unlike criminal prosecution, civil claims can be brought by any individual who FEELS aggrieved, with a lower standard of proof and costs falling on the respondent regardless of outcome, creating a significant risk of vexatious claims. This provision would be catastrophic for religious communities, as faith leaders and pastoral care activities would be exposed to civil liability for simply expressing their sincerely held views. The breadth of the definition means that expressing a traditional religious teaching that has been held for hundreds/ thousands of years, in a conversation, sermon, therapy session, or public forum could trigger liability, with pastors, priests, imams, and rabbis who offer prayer, counsel, or scripture-based guidance facing civil liability simply for fulfilling their pastoral duties. The costs burden on respondents creates a powerful deterrent against any pastoral engagement with these questions, resulting in a pervasive chilling effect on speech that goes far beyond any legitimate regulatory purpose.

