



1 Peter 5:10

2 February 2026

Mr Brian Mitchell MP  
Government Administration Committee A

Via email: [assemblygaa@parliament.tas.gov.au](mailto:assemblygaa@parliament.tas.gov.au)

## **Inquiry into Discrimination and Bullying in Tasmanian Schools**

Dear Mr Mitchell,

On 23 December last, I wrote to you with the following two paragraphs opening my response to your invitation to attend a public hearing at 9am on 28 January 2026:

*Your letter of 16<sup>th</sup> December 2025 regarding the Inquiry into Discrimination and Bullying in Tasmanian Schools with an invitation to attend a public hearing is somewhat troubling to me.*

*The invitation came four days after Dr Gerard Gaskin announced his retirement, and it makes one wonder why the Committee would want “an update” from the Archdiocese of Hobart and Catholic Education Tasmania.*

*At this point an interim director of Catholic Education only commenced yesterday and he would not be in a position to contribute to such a hearing.*

With this letter, I express my growing concern about the abovementioned invitation. I found it most curious that an invitation for the Archdiocese to appear again and provide “an update” was also extended to Equality Tasmania which had no change of personnel.

On Thursday morning, on ABC Radio Hobart at the 20:20 minute mark during Leon Compton’s program, Mr Croome said the following:

*Yesterday’s hearing was meant to be for the, chiefly, for the Archbishop, the new Archbishop and the new head of Catholic Education to come along and just say whether in fact that was still their view or whether they wanted to see things improve. And it was very disappointing from my point of view that they didn’t attend, and they didn’t take up the invitation, and instead it was just those who had experienced discrimination and bullying who were able to tell their personal stories. And all credit to them they did it very bravely and compellingly, and I take my hat off to them.*

Therefore, several questions arise about the hearing on 28 January: if the intent of the hearing, as Mr Croome asserted, was to chiefly hear the view of the new Archbishop and CET leadership, what was the Committee’s purpose in recalling Equality Tasmania? And, what was the Committee’s

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purpose in having that testimony follow myself and CET leadership as they had done in February last year?

The Archdiocese has engaged in this process in good faith to inform and support the inquiry into steps to prevent and remedy unjust discrimination and all forms of bullying in all Tasmanian schools. Notwithstanding the Committee's terms of reference, Mr Croome's remarks in his ABC interview suggest a disturbingly more narrow and targeted focus. It would be deeply regrettable if the Committee's efforts to address serious concerns for Tasmanian Schools were to be significantly influenced by such a narrow focus.

As stated in my 23 December letter, we are not in a position to contribute anything further at this time. However, I do feel obliged to inform you that some of the testimony that was presented on Wednesday by the Equality Tasmania witnesses was not consistent with the declaration sworn to present "the whole truth and nothing but the truth". While we are constrained by the terms of a non-disclosure agreement from correcting the record, the Committee should be made aware that the testimony should not be relied upon for the purposes that it was proposed.

Yours sincerely



Most Rev. Anthony J. Ireland  
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