

**Concerned Catholics Tasmania (CCT): Support for the Submission by *Catholics for Renewal* on the Exposure Draft of the Australian Government’s Communications Legislation Amendment (Combating Misinformation and Disinformation) Bill 2023 (3 August 2023).**

Concerned Catholics Tasmania (CCT) is a colleague group to Catholics for Renewal (CfR) with the common purpose of working for the renewal and reform of the Catholic Church. CCT is supportive of the key claim of the CfR submission, which reads as follows:

*We submit the Catholic Church’s official doctrine that ‘the inclination [to homosexuality] must be seen as an objective disorder’ (Homosexualitatis Problema, CDF 1986), and that morally ‘homosexual acts are intrinsically disordered’<sup>1</sup> (Catechism of the Catholic Church n. 2357)*

- (a) will fall foul of the proposed legislation, and*
- (b) that no exemption should be granted to teach it on the relevant media platforms, and*
- (c) that, if it is to be taught on those platforms, the bill ought to be amended to require the church (and other religious bodies teaching it on such platforms) to accompany the teaching with an acknowledgment that modern psychiatry has ceased to regard homosexuality as a disorder, and instead regards it as falling on the spectrum of norm sexuality.*

In Tasmania, we have concerns regarding the current Catholic Church senior leadership, which is openly committed to implementing the traditional doctrine of the Church that condemns homosexuality as an ‘objective disorder’ and homosexual acts as morally ‘disordered’. This teaching has the potential to damage the human dignity and rights of staff, clients and students in the Catholic Diocese who identify as LGBTIQA+. Further, Catholic schools and organisations in Tasmania are required to endorse the doctrine through curricula, policies, organisational culture and daily practice. The official teachings of the Catholic Church that relate to homosexuality, sexuality and gender are all accessible online.

Those who are employed within Church governed organisations can be hampered in their ministry and duty of care by enforcement of these traditionalist doctrines. The doctrines are at variance with the findings of credible, contemporary science, accepted in Australia and in the majority of countries across the world.

Concerned Catholics Tasmania, support the arguments laid out in the body of the submission in defence of points (a), (b) and (c) as listed above. We support the conclusion of the CfR submission that insistence on Catholic doctrine related to homosexuality leaves the Church open to be exposed as discriminatory and unjust in its relationships with those LGBTIQA+ people it is called to serve within its officially registered public services.



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Susan Chen, Chair Concerned Catholics Tasmania August 8<sup>th</sup>, 2023