

17th March 2018



Dear Minister

Friday was the National Day of Action against Violence and Bullying. As a parent of a gay male, I find it extremely disappointing that this government which has been the friend of LGBTIQ people repealing bad legislation and ensuring equality cannot find funds to ensure an anti-bullying program continues in our schools.

Every student, including our LGBTIQ children deserve the right to feel safe at school while receiving their education.

Teachers and staff need to feel confident, know their terminology is respectful towards students struggling with their gender identity or sexual diversity. Plus, know they are supported by you, our government.

The cost of training per school is \$250. \$60,000 is the minimum amount needed to ensure the revised program is viable in Queensland.

However, I have been told by the Education Minister, she believes schools should pay for training and schools believe they should receive training free of charge.

Meanwhile, LGBTIQ students are being bullied and I am asking who will take responsibility?

Therefore, as a mother of a gay male, I have personally donated \$60,000 to ensure schools who seek training to minimise bullying of our children are supported. I believe this issue is not about politics, appeasing the ACL (by doing nothing) or dollars. The priority should be about the protection of our children.

Your media statement on 16th March, states "Queensland has been a leader against bullying for the last 15 years", but not a cent has been allocated for LGBTIQ youth who are one of the most vulnerable groups in need of support. Surely, as a government, you can find some additional funding to ensure the safety of our children at school

I would be very happy to meet with you if you would like to discuss this concern further.

Shelley Argent OAM  
National Spokesperson PFLAG  
0409 363 335

2017 Zero Bullying  
<http://bzaf.org.au/homophobic-bullying/>