



Andrew Barr MLA

Chief Minister

Member for Kurrajong

Treasurer

Minister for Economic Development

Minister for Tourism and Major Events

Ms Anne Hywood

General Secretary

Anglican Church of Australia General Synod

Suite 4, Level 5, 189 Kent Street

SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Ms Hywood

Thank you for your letters of 21 September 2017 about the resolutions passed by the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Australia. The ACT Government welcomes input on key issues facing the ACT, and in response I would like to highlight some of the work we are already undertaking to address many of your concerns.

I note your letter sought leadership from governments in reducing greenhouse gas omissions and addressing climate change. The ACT continues to lead the country, with the most ambitious greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets in the country. We are on track to achieve our target: a 40% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions on 1990 levels and the use of 100% renewable energy by 2020. More information on how the ACT Government is demonstrating our leadership in responding to climate change can be found in our Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan.

I also note your resolution calling for the development of a national system for child protection. My government, in response to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, has recognised the need for improved child protection measures, and has introduced a Reportable Conduct Scheme to oversee how organisations prevent and respond to allegations of child abuse and misconduct. The scheme is an employment-based child protection measure designed to ensure allegations of abuse and certain criminal convictions are identified, reported and acted on appropriately. The ACT is also supportive of the development of a national reportable conduct scheme.

Regarding your call for the development of a stronger screening process for workers under the age of eighteen, I can inform you that my government has already extended the Working With Children check system to younger workers. The system now includes mandatory screenings for all those aged sixteen and over, and optional screening for those under the age of sixteen. The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse's national working group is also considering a range of measures to strengthen child protection, including a review of the Working with Children systems, and the ACT will continue to work closely with the Commonwealth and other States and Territories to respond to the Commission's findings and to improve child protection nationally.

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We also recognise the need for strong action on issues affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) people. Our Office for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs co-ordinates a whole-of-government approach on addressing issues facing ATSI communities in Canberra, and we have an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body to ensure ATSI people have a strong democratically elected voice. The ACT Government is also working with the Commonwealth and other States and Territories to refresh of the national 'Closing the Gap' agenda, which will drive a national response to the issues you have raised in your correspondence.

Whilst it is pleasing to see that the national body of the Anglican Church's interest in these diverse matters and the resolutions' impact on the community's spiritual, moral and social welfare, I note the Anglican Diocese of Sydney made a significant contribution to the "no" campaign on the marriage equality debate, potentially impacting the welfare and wellbeing of its congregation and the broader Australian community.

Thank you for writing to me on the Synod's resolutions.

Yours sincerely



Andrew Barr MLA
Chief Minister

26 OCT 2017