

## Short Summary of 'Supporting Statements' Australian Christian Values Check List Federal election – August 2010

Our responses are taken from Party platforms, public statements, media reports, voting records, etc. For more information on Party Policies please refer to individual Party websites or the Checklist. A full version of the 'Supporting Statements' is at <http://www.christianvalues.org.au> The ACVL focuses on clear Biblical moral and ethical issues. Naturally, we should apply our Christianity to every aspect of life and carefully analyse all party policies as well as the personal values of each candidate.

### **Q1. Prayers to open Parliament each day**

The Greens have consistently tried to have the opening prayer abolished.

### **Q2. Teach Australia's Christian heritage and history in all schools**

Prior to the 2007 election the Coalition had planned to teach Australian history that included Christian heritage, several Christians were on the planning group. After the 2007 election, Labor scrapped that program and pursued the 'national curriculum'. The proposed history component doesn't include our Christian heritage but rather has sections on unions and revolution.

### **Q3. Support guaranteed funding for national school Chaplaincy program**

Labor will review the current Chaplaincy program. Julia Gillard and Stephen Smith have talked of making it a 'secular' program.

### **Q4. Promotion and support of marriage over de facto cohabitation**

Family First refers to 'marriage and relationships' and refers to couples adopting without specifying married couples. The major parties don't distinguish between marriage and *de facto* relationships. Labor PM Julia Gillard is living in a *de facto* relationship. The Greens see all relationships as equal.

### **Q5. Provide free pre-marriage education for couples**

CDP and Family First are the only Parties

to *specifically* support free pre-marriage education.

### **Q6. Family impact statement tabled publicly in Parliament before vote**

CDP and Family First have policies proposing a Family Impact Statement on all legislation before Parliament. After the 2004 election, Family First had an agreement with the Coalition about such statements.

### **Q7. Support parents' choice in education with educational vouchers**

CDP, Family First and the DLP specifically support educational vouchers – the principle is that parents would be provided with an assessed amount of funding for their child which they could then present to the school of their choice.

### **Q8. Support the 'presumption' of equal shared parenting after divorce**

The Coalition, whilst in government, supported some changes to the court system regarding custody and shared parenting.

### **Q9. Preserve marriage - Oppose same-sex marriage**

The ALP changed its policy position on marriage at their 2009 National Conference. They removed 'man and woman'. In 2009, two state ALP conferences voted to support same-sex 'marriage'. See our additional detailed statement on the ALP position on marriage.

### **Q10. Oppose registration of same-sex relationships (State & Federal)**

The Labor Platform supports "recognition" of homosexual relationships. The Greens support this as well as same-sex 'marriage'.

### **Q11. Protect children - No overseas adoption by same-sex couples**

Labor supports the "removal of all discrimination". The Greens actually state they support same-sex adoption.

### **Q12. Oppose creation and destruction of embryos for research**

In 2006 parliament passed a law allowing

the creation of embryos for research. This is specifically opposed by CDP, DLP and Family First. In the 2006 federal parliament conscience vote, 94% of Nationals, 59% of Liberals, 31% of Labor and 25% of the Greens opposed embryo research.

### **Q13. Life is precious - Oppose overseas aid for abortion**

The Liberal/National Coalition, prior to 2007, consistently refused to allow overseas aid to be used for abortion. In March 2009, the *AusAID* rules were changed by the Labor government to allow overseas aid to be used for abortion. The Greens support this.

### **Q14. Medicare funding of abortion**

Labor and Greens support Medicare funding for abortion. The Coalition doesn't have a direct policy. During the last parliament Liberal Sen Guy Barnett introduced a private Senator's Bill to remove Medicare funding for some abortions but it was not voted on.

### **Q15. Euthanasia**

In various states Greens MPs have introduced voluntary euthanasia laws. In the federal parliament Bob Brown introduced a bill to allow the NT euthanasia law to be re-instated.

### **Q16. Extend States' ban on X Rated pornography to ACT & NT**

Currently, all states ban the sale and display of X-rated pornography but the ACT and NT do not. This means X-rated pornographic DVDs and videos can be mailed to all states, CDP, Family First and the DLP support a national ban. Neither the Coalition nor Labor has acted on the issue. The Greens don't support a ban.

### **Q17. Support mandatory ISP filtering**

This has been adopted as policy by CDP, Family First, DLP and Labor. Amidst claims that freedom of information would be affected, and uncertainty about what material would be censored, the Coalition has not generally supported this proposal. The Greens oppose ISP filtering.

### **Q18. Raise & enforce standards of decency in all forms of media**

CDP, Family First want the standards increased and enforced. The Coalition made

some positive changes to the classification guidelines in government. Labor/Greens have no plans to intervene in this area.

### **Q19. Preserve free speech - Oppose religious & sexuality vilification laws**

Labor/Greens support vilification laws.

### **Q20. Allow religious bodies freedom of choice in whom they employ**

Labor at state level has consistently supported restricting freedom of choice in whom religious groups can employ. Greens don't support exemptions for religious groups.

### **Q21. Protect freedom - Oppose Charter of Rights & similar legislation**

The Labor government commissioned a national consultation into a Charter or Bill of Rights. The Committee recommended a Charter of Rights. Labor said they would not introduce one, but said they would introduce various legal instruments that effectively act in the same way a Charter of Rights would. The Greens totally support a Bill of Rights.

### **Q22. Oppose all illicit drugs & fund abstinence based rehabilitation**

The Coalition opposed the decriminalisation of illicit drugs and provided funds to abstinence-based rehabilitation programs. Labor doesn't support the decriminalisation of illicit drugs but removed funding from a number of abstinence-based rehabilitation programs. The Greens support injecting rooms and heroin trials. They also promote harm minimisation.

### **Q23. Support greater care of God's environment**

Environment policy is a challenging issue, with Christians holding varying views, especially on the controversial issue of 'global warming'/climate change. We believe Christians need to be good stewards of the environment and use resources wisely.

'Supporting Statements' prepared for the Australian Christian Values Institute by Salt Shakers – [www.saltshakers.org.au](http://www.saltshakers.org.au)

Authorised by W Marsh, 217 Nolan St, Berkeley NSW 2506.