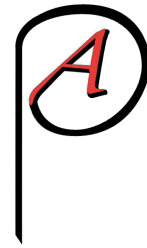


Progressive Atheists Inc.

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Proud Member of Atheist Alliance International

Member Group of Secular Coalition of Australia



Victorian State By Election Candidate Survey

Election Date: Saturday, 31 October 2015

South-West Coast By-Election

Answers & Comments of Candidate

Pete Smith

- 1. Special Religious Instruction:** do you approve of the minister for education removing SRI from class time in Victoria?

YES

- 2. Special Religious Instruction:** do you support the removal of SRI from the education and training reform act?

YES

- 3. Comparative Religious Education:** are you in favour of F-10 school curriculum in Victorian schools to teach about the 5 major world religions (Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, Judaism and Hinduism) and in addition secular humanism / rationalism?

YES

Comment: As part of cultural and geographical affairs. Not as part of religious instruction.

- 4. School Chaplain Alternatives:** are you in favour of the Victorian government providing funding for secular welfare workers to those schools who choose not to have a religious chaplain?

NO

Comment: If the question means full time secular welfare worker in each school then the answer is no. However, if welfare workers are on standby to deal with traumatic events then I am in favour of welfare workers.

- 5. Inclusive Schools:** are you in favour of Safe Schools Coalition Australia whose services aim to improve safety and inclusivity for same sex attracted, intersex and gender diverse students, their families and teachers, while taking a zero-tolerance approach to homophobia and transphobia in the school community?

OTHER

Comment: Frankly, I think we are ascribing an adult approach to the wonders and challenges of growing up.

- 6. Respectful Relationships:** are you in favour of the new Victorian schools curriculum resource “Building Respectful Relationships – Stepping Out Against Gender-Based Violence” a new teaching resource for Victorian secondary students to learn how to build healthy relationships, understand global cultures, ethics and traditions, and to prevent family violence?

YES

Comment: Yes. Absolutely. I prepared 16 case studies as a resource for social workers working at the coal face as employees of the South Australian Department of Health, Family and Ageing

- 7. Anti-discrimination Legislation:** should religious bodies be allowed to discriminate in employment even when religious faith is not a genuine occupational qualification for that job?

YES

Comment: These are people driven by a faith that I do not understand. But nevertheless, despite my personal views I am not at war with religion (though it is akin to believing in UFOs)

8. Mandatory Reporting Laws: are you in favour of removing religious exemptions to the mandatory reporting of child abuse?

NO

Comment: I had to read and re-read this question over and over. I do not believe religion is any licence to break criminal law.

9. Abortion Laws: are you in favour of maintaining the current laws on abortion in Victoria?

YES

Comment: And I am in favour of completely banning those bastards who harass vulnerable women attending day procedure clinics such as that in East Melbourne.

10. End of Life Choices: would you support a bill that allowed a terminally or incurably ill person the right to choose the manner and timing of their death, under strict safeguards, by providing humane medical assistance?

YES

Comment: In the manner of Dignitas

11. Medicinal Cannabis: are you in favour of developing a Victorian industry to produce cannabis for medicinal purposes?

YES

Comment: Absolutely. I have seen first hand the benefits of medicinal cannabis in generating appetite and, in one case, saving a friend in his 40s from certain suicide.

12. Climate Change: South Australian has a renewable energy target of 50% by 2025, and the ACT has a target of 90% by 2020. Would you support a bill for a transparent target for renewable energy in Victoria akin to targets in SA and ACT?

YES

Comment: A central part of my platform (and well publicised) is the creation of a renewable energies research and resource centre co-located with the campus of a major university at Portland.

13. Victorian Duties and Taxes: are you in favour of removing religious exemptions in the Duties Act 2000?

YES

Comment: Religions (but not their charitable works) should be subject to the same taxes, concessions, benefits and impositions as any other enterprise.

14. Victorian Duties and Taxes: are you in favour of removing religious exemptions in the Debts Tax Act 1990?

YES

Comment: Religions (but not their charitable works) should be subject to the same taxes, concessions, benefits and impositions as any other enterprise.

15. Victorian Duties and Taxes: are you in favour of removing religious exemptions in the Payroll Tax Act 1971?

YES

Comment: Religions (but not their charitable works) should be subject to the same taxes, concessions, benefits and impositions as any other enterprise.

16. Victorian Duties and Taxes: are you in favour of removing religious exemptions in the Land Tax Act 1958?

YES

Comment: Religions (but not their charitable works) should be subject to the same taxes, concessions, benefits and impositions as any other enterprise.

17. Prayer in the Victorian Parliament: are you in favour of the Lord's prayer being replaced with silent reflection (as in the ACT parliament) at the commencement of each sitting day?

YES

Comment: In favour of a moment of "personal reflection"

18. Prayer in the Victorian Parliament: are you in favour of sanctioned affirmations from religious and nonreligious worldviews, in addition to the Lord's prayer, to be said on a rotational basis at the commencement of each sitting day?

NO

Comment: In favour of a moment of personal reflection.

END