



Simon Corbell MLA

ATTORNEY GENERAL
MINISTER FOR POLICE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES
MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

MEMBER FOR MOLONGLO

MEDIA RELEASE

RIGHT TO EDUCATION ENSHRINED IN HUMAN RIGHTS LAW

The ACT has become the first jurisdiction in Australia to recognise an economic, social or cultural right in a bill of rights, with the successful passing of legislation to recognise the right to education, Attorney General, Simon Corbell, said today.

“This new legislation is the latest step in a proud record held by the ACT Labor Government which was the first State or Territory Government to introduce a Human Rights Act in 2004, and is now the first to formally recognise in legislation a social, economic or cultural right,” Mr Corbell said.

“We recognise that education is a fundamental right for all Canberrans and marks the start of a prosperous life built on strong foundations.

“The ACT Labor Government is committed to ensuring that all children in the ACT have the same opportunity to an education from a young age that will establish learning and behavioural patterns for the rest of their life.”

The law enshrines the right to access free school education for all individuals without discrimination.

This bill is the first step in incorporating economic, social and cultural rights into the Human Rights Act, based on the recommendations from the *Australian Capital Territory Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Research Project Report*.

“The Human Rights Act is having a positive impact in fostering a culture of respect for human rights and protecting the rights of individuals in the ACT,” Mr Corbell said.

“The government will work closely with public authorities to allow appropriate time for them to understand how the new legislated right to education will work in practice and how it applies to their policies and practices.”

A review will be undertaken by the Government in two years time to look at the operation of the amendments.

Statement Ends: 23 August, 2012

Media Contacts: Patrick Cronan 6205 0401 (w) 0432 758 224 (m) patrick.cronan@act.gov.au