

**From:** Armorel Carlyon [<Redacted>]

**Sent:** 14 April 2011 17:04

**To:** Specific Duties

**Cc:** Sarah NEWTON

**Subject:** Response to the Consultation on the Equality Act 2010(Specific Duties) Regulations 2011

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am very surprised to read that the Coalition Government are considering setting equality targets. I was hoping that the present Act would have been modified to address widespread concerns that it undermines religious freedom. I would suggest that this is not a good time to be increasing the burden in Local Government offices. We are all under severe pressure with cuts to frontline services and to introduce more bureaucracy is not welcome.

My experience as an Independent Councillor stretches back to the 1970s. Twenty years service on Cornwall County Council, Chairman of the District Council and at present a Councillor on Truro City Council, has convinced me that the present Equality Act does nothing to promote community harmony. In my opinion it is divisive and does not help minority groups because when it comes to the Equality Act it appears some people have more rights than others.

I find it difficult to understand why it should be necessary for Councils and schools to publish information annually on how they meet equality targets. There are better things to be doing - let the schools get on with the job they have to do. I am sure you are aware that many a Head has "gone under" with the amount of form filling and red tape that is showered upon them. What exactly is going to be achieved by this new idea?

Following press reports it would seem that this is the time to be reducing the existing equality law to make it less antagonistic to religious freedom. It is my opinion that the general public are becoming very worried that they no longer have the freedom to speak to people without the fear of being reported to employers, to officials or even to the police. Those working within local authorities are under particular pressure. Equality is often over-interpreted and people feel pushed into adopting positions on controversial social and political issues. They are becoming angry about the political correctness being imposed upon them. I believe that this regulation is going a step too far.

I would ask you to do away with this new regulation altogether as in my opinion it will serve no useful purpose.

Yours faithfully,

Armorel Carlyon (Cllr. Truro City Council)