

**From:** [Chris Duke](#)  
**To:** [Bill Tilley](#); [Brad Battin](#); [James Newbury](#); [Matthew Guy](#); [David Southwick](#); [David Hodgett](#); [Renee Heath](#); [Cindy McLeish](#); [Bridget Vallence](#); [John Pesutto](#); [Jess Wilson](#); [Michael O'Brien](#); [Chris Crewther](#); [Wayne Farnham](#); [Sam Groth](#); [Matthew Bach](#); [Nick McGowan](#); [Evan Mulholland](#); [Wendy Lovell](#); [Richard Riordan](#); [Kim Wells](#); [Brad Rowswell](#); [Ann-Marie Hermans](#); [Roma Britnell](#); [David Davis](#); [Georgie Crozier](#); [Ryan Smith](#); [Moira Deeming](#); [Trung Luu](#); [Beverley McArthur](#); [Joe McCracken](#)  
**Subject:** Regarding Moira Deeming from the Presbyterian Church of Victoria  
**Date:** Thursday, 23 March 2023 1:24:13 PM  
**Attachments:** [PastedGraphic-1.png](#)  
[PCV LetterToMrJohnPesutto&AllStateLiberalMPs\\_FINAL.docx](#)

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**Dear Mr John Pesutto and all Liberal State Parliamentary Members of Victoria,**

Please find enclosed a letter from the Moderator of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, (Rev Peter Phillips) and the Convener of the Church and Nation Committee of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria (Rev Christopher Duke) in relation to the recent controversy and proposed expulsion of MLC representative, Mrs Moira Deeming.

We pray that you will read this letter and consider its contents wisely.

Yours Sincerely,



Rev Christopher Duke  
Convener  
Church and Nation Committee  
Presbyterian Church of Victoria

[Redacted]  
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[Redacted]

March 23, 2023.

**To the Liberal and Opposition leader Mr John Pesutto and all Liberal members of the Victorian parliament.**

We are writing in support of Mrs Moira Deeming MLC, who is a member of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria<sup>1</sup> in good standing.

The Presbyterian Church of Victoria wishes to express its deep concern that Mr Pesutto has moved to expel Mrs Deeming from the Victorian Liberal parliamentary party on the basis of (a) her attendance and participation in a *Let Women Speak* event on the steps of Parliament on Sunday, March 19, 2023, and (b) Mrs Deeming's association with event organiser Ms Kellie-Jay Keen, who, according to Mr Pesutto and three of his colleagues, is "publicly associated with far right-wing extremist groups including neo-Nazi activists".<sup>2</sup>

We dispute any suggestion that Mrs Deeming has ever consorted with or supported right-wing extremists. This would be entirely inconsistent with her known character and values. After the rally, the Australian Jewish Association itself issued a statement saying it was "disgraceful" that some politicians and elements of the media had falsely smeared the rally as being involved with neo-Nazis. "The Let Women Speak organisers had nothing to do with the event," the association said.<sup>3</sup>

Our church shares the concerns expressed by Mrs Deeming and others at the *Let Women Speak* rally, that the safety of women and girls is being jeopardised through the erosion of women's rights — in particular, the right of access to female-only toilets, change rooms, shelters and correctional facilities — through the aggressive promotion and adoption of transgender ideology in Victorian institutions and law.

It seems unwise to us in the extreme, and sets a deplorable precedent, that Mr Pesutto, and his three colleagues who co-signed his March 20 letter to Mrs Deeming, should be so intent on expelling a democratically-elected sitting member of parliament from the Victorian Liberal parliamentary party on the basis of (a) a tenuous connection between Mrs Deeming and Ms Keen's supposed association with Nazism, (b) reliance upon questionable sources of information as evidence of Ms Keen's supposed association with right wing extremists, including discredited allegations derived from Wikipedia, and (c) ill-conceived reasoning about Mrs Deeming's response to the unexpected appearance of neo-Nazis at the *Let Women Speak* event.

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<sup>1</sup> The Presbyterian Church of Victoria (PCV) consists of 136 congregations, representing approximately 10,000 people under our care and ministry. In addition, we have five schools that educate 4,300 students, one aged care facility and one theological college.

The PCV's Church and Nation Committee exists to advise the PCV on contemporary trends and controversial issues in public life and to represent the church in communication with government, the media and other outside bodies on matters of social and ethical concern.

<sup>2</sup> Letter, dated March 20, 2023, from Victorian Liberal leader Mr John Pesutto MP, Mr David Southwick MP, Ms Georgie Crozier MLC and Dr Matt Bach MLC, to Mrs Moira Deeming MLC, advising her of their intention to expel her from the Victorian parliamentary party.

<sup>3</sup> Sumeyya Ilanbey, "Liberals move to expel Moira Deeming over neo-Nazi rally links", *The Age* (Melbourne), March 19, 2023.  
URL: <https://www.theage.com.au/politics/victoria/liberals-move-to-expel-moira-deeming-over-neo-nazi-rally-links-20230319-p5ctqm.html>

Mr Pesutto's move shows alarming contempt for (a) the democratic processes through which Mrs Deeming won pre-selection to represent the Liberal Party and then her seat in the Legislative Council at the 2022 Victorian Elections, (b) Liberal Party members and the people of the Western Metropolitan Region who voted for her, (c) the concerns and rights of women and girls, which Mrs Deeming so eloquently and courageous defends, and (d) the freedom of speech which the *Let Women Speak* participants were exercising.

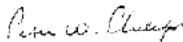
Mr Pesutto has justified his actions and claimed that he is a progressive Liberal and that he intends to represent all Victorians. He is wrong on both counts.

There is nothing remotely progressive about exposing women and girls to situations in which they are likely to feel embarrassed, unsafe, or exposed to risk of abuse. There is nothing remotely progressive about allowing the desires of the powerful — in this case, biological males who identify as women — to trump the rights of those who are vulnerable — in this case, women, and girls.

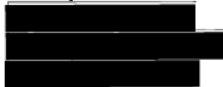
And in pandering to the radical left, by denying the reality and relevance of biology to the detriment of the safety of Victorian women and girls, he alienates and most certainly does not represent, the common-sense views of the majority of Victorian voters.

We urge Mr Pesutto and all Victorian state Liberal MPs to reconsider their intention to expel Mrs Deeming at the meeting of the party room on Monday, March 27, 2023. Failure to change course would represent a radical departure from the Liberal Party's proclaimed values and completely alienate many thousands of Victorian voters already increasingly dissatisfied with the party's direction. Surely many Liberal voters will reconsider their choices next election should this expulsion occur.

Yours sincerely,



**Rev. Peter Phillips**  
Moderator of the General Assembly,  
Presbyterian Church of Victoria.



**Rev. Christopher Duke,**  
Convener, Church and Nation Committee,  
Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

