

Media release  
John Kaye - Greens NSW MP  
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## **FIRTH MUST HONOUR PROMISE ON ETHICS CLASS TRIAL**

The Greens are calling on NSW Education Minister Verity Firth to resist pressure from the organised religions to break her undertaking to trial ethics classes for children who do not enrol in the scripture classes in public schools, according to Greens NSW MP John Kaye.

Dr Kaye said: "The minister and many other politicians are being subjected to an orchestrated backlash.

"For more than a 130 year a select group of religions has held a monopoly over one hour a week in public schools.

"Children whose parents did not subscribe to one of the creeds on offer were forced to squander an hour a week on non-educational activities.

"Minister Firth sensibly agreed to the proposal for a secular ethics alternative and now she is in the firing line for daring to challenge the power of organised religion.

"The ferocious response from the Sydney Anglican Church and other groups is out of all proportion to the impact the trial will have.

"What happens to the students who opt out of the organised religion classes should be none of their business.

"NSW should have moved beyond the days when the Anglican Church or any other faith can dictate what the rest of society can and cannot do.

"The churches have created the appearance of attempting to maintain a closed shop approach to beliefs.

"Verity Firth should ignore their attempts to undermine a project that has nothing to do with them.

"The Minister is to be congratulated for agreeing to the trial. She must not succumb to the intolerance of a small but influential group who feel their cosy monopoly might be threatened," Dr Kaye said.

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