

Expanding Adult Time, Adult Crime and Taking a Strong Stance on Drugs and Anti-Social Behaviour Amendment Bill 2026

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Submission By: Australian Christian Lobby

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Justice, Integrity and Community Safety
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Dear Chair,

The Australia Christian Lobby (ACL) is grateful for the opportunity to provide this submission to the Expanding Adult Crime, Adult Time and Taking a Strong Stance on Drugs and Anti-Social Behaviour Amendment Bill 2026.

This submission is approved at ACL's national organisation level.

Yours sincerely,



Rob Norman
Queensland Director, Australian Christian Lobby

SUBMISSION:

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AUSTRALIAN CHRISTIAN LOBBY

About Australian Christian Lobby

The vision of the Australian Christian Lobby (ACL) is to see Christian principles and ethics influencing the way we are governed, do business, and relate to each other as a community. ACL seeks to see a compassionate, just and moral society through having the public contributions of the Christian faith reflected in the political life of the nation.

With around 250,000 supporters, ACL facilitates professional engagement and dialogue between the Christian constituency and government, allowing the Voice of Christians to be heard in the public square. ACL is neither party-partisan nor denominationally aligned. ACL representatives bring a Christian perspective to policy makers in Federal, State and Territory Parliaments.

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Executive Summary

The Australian Christian Lobby (ACL) is concerned about the introduction of Designated Business and Community Precincts (DBCP's) in this bill. This is because it relies on the current definitions under section 46 of the *Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000*, which are too vague. The Act currently allows 'move on' directions for conduct that is 'causing anxiety' and being 'Disorderly, indecent, offensive, or threatening to someone'.¹ 'Causing anxiety' is subjective and could lead to directions to 'move on' for legitimate street preaching, evangelism, freedom of speech, freedom of religion, political communication and advocacy. The ACL recommends that these acts need to be protected at law, by clarifying the definition around 'causing anxiety'. We also recommend providing explicit clarification around 'Disorderly, indecent, offensive, or threatening to someone' in section 46. Section 46 should include the examples in section 602c(3)(a).

Designated Business and Community Precincts

This bill expands the areas in which the 'move on'² direction and the 'banning notice'³ powers can be used by police. The bill introduces Designated Business and Community Precincts (DBCP's), which are new specified areas in which these powers can be explicitly used.

Directions to 'Move On'

Definitions for 'move on' need to be better defined. This bill expands existing powers in relation to a direction to 'move on'. When reviewing the existing powers, it is clear that definitions in Section 46 of the *Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000* need to be better defined.

'Billboard Chris' example: Chris Elston, known as 'Billboard Chris' was in the Queen Street Mall on 24 March 2025 wearing a sign that said, "CHILDREN CANNOT CONSENT TO PUBERTY BLOCKERS". He stood there quietly and if someone approached him to talk about the subject, he would respectfully discuss why it was important. For doing this, a Brisbane City Council officer initially fined him on the spot for 'obstructing or unreasonably disturbing anyone lawfully using the mall'. The council officer also asked for the assistance of police, who then issued a direction to 'move on'. The council fine was ultimately withdrawn.⁴

¹ *Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000* (Qld) s 46-47

² *Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000* (Qld) s 48

³ *Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000* (Qld) s 602c

⁴ Chris Elston. (2025). Billboard Chris. X. See video of fine being issued and removal by police. Also see letter from Brisbane City Council:

<https://x.com/billboardchris/status/193700369703022256?s=46&t=fsJx24UJJSKv84XXKYAnIA>

Although the authority of this direction originated from the Brisbane City Council. It is a good example of how these laws can inhibit freedom of political communication and speech. It's clear that the content of the message caused 'offence' to some people, prompting the council and the police to act. Chris Elston's actions, and actions like it, should be protected at law. Police should not be able to move on people who are trying to peacefully reach the public on important issues of political, cultural and spiritual life.

Direction to 'move on' can be justified by 'causing anxiety' to another person.

Causing anxiety is specified as conduct that could justify a direction to 'move on'. This term is subjective and isn't defined in the Act. This could have broad interpretation by police and the courts. This needs to be better defined to ensure legitimate freedom of speech, religion and political communication is protected. This should include street preaching, political advocacy and acts like what Chris Elston did in March 2025.

It's important that causing anxiety does not include differences in political, cultural, scientific and spiritual beliefs. 'Causing anxiety' was penned in the original Act in the year 2000⁵. It would have been inconceivable, when this Act was established, that we would have the sensitivity to anxiety that we have today. People today can experience anxiety over simple differences of opinion. When undefined, courts generally apply the current meaning of a word, not its interpretation when enacted.⁶ Therefore, it's important to update this to guard against 'move on' directions being used against legitimate freedoms and differences in opinion.

'Disorderly, indecent, offensive, or threatening to someone' is referenced in the 'move on' direction.⁷ This isn't defined under this section, but examples are given under the banning notice section which is arguably a higher level of intervention by police.

The banning notice section gives the following examples for 'disorderly, indecent, offensive, or threatening to someone':⁸

- assaulting or threatening to assault a person
- damaging property, attempting to damage property or threatening to damage property
- possessing a knife in contravention of the Weapons Act 1990, section 51
- stealing an item from a person or premises
- taking a photograph of a person using a toilet facility from under a cubicle door
- urinating or wilfully exposing genitals in contravention of the Summary Offences Act 2005, section 7 or 9
- using or possessing a dangerous drug

⁵ *Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000* (Qld) s 37(1)(a), as enacted.

⁶ *Deputy Commissioner of Taxation v Clark* (2003) 57 NSWLR 113, 145

⁷ *Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000* (Qld) s 46(1)(c)

⁸ *Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000* (Qld) s 602C(3)(a)

- wearing or carrying an item in contravention of the Summary Offences Act 2005, section 10C.

The above examples help provide clarity of conduct that could lead to a banning notice. Banning notices arguably would not apply to street preaching or controversial public advocacy like what Billboard Chris does. This is a good thing. The clarity provided in banning notices isn't duplicated in a direction to 'move on'.

There is a reasonable argument to suggest that the examples given in banning notices, would apply to the 'move on direction'.⁹ However, an explicit reference in section 46 would help clarify the intention of the Act.

Recommendations:

Amend '**Part 5 Directions to move on**' in the *Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000* to include:

1. A definition for 'causing anxiety' that in effect ensures legitimate freedom of speech isn't impeded. This needs to protect street preaching, evangelism, political and social discourse, and advocacy similar to that undertaken by Chris Elston.
2. A definition for 'disorderly, indecent, offensive, or threatening to someone' included in section 46, as in section 602C.

If our first recommendation was not implemented, we would recommend not proceeding with introducing Designated Business and Community Precincts (DBCP's) to ensure that legitimate freedoms are not impacted.

⁹ *Wilson v Commissioner of Stamp Duties* (1986) 6 NSWLR 410, 418-19