

Fighting Antisemitism and Keeping Guns out of the Hands of Terrorists and Criminals Amendment Bill 2026

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The Services Union

Submission to the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee concerning the FIGHTING ANTISEMITISM AND KEEPING GUNS OUT OF THE HANDS OF TERRORISTS AND CRIMINALS AMENDMENT BILL 2026

Submitter: Neil Henderson, Secretary

Organisation: The Services Union

Address: 32 Peel Street, South Brisbane QLD 4101

Phone: 07 3844 5300

Email: [REDACTED]

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About The Services Union

We are the Australian Municipal, Administrative, Clerical and Services Union Queensland (Services and Northern Administrative) Branch and the Queensland Services, Industrial Union of Employees trading as The Services Union.

Currently our members work in a wide variety of industries and occupations such as:

- Disability Support
- Social and Community Services
- Local Government
- Transport, including passenger air and rail transport, road, rail and air freight transport
- Clerical and Administrative employees in commerce and industry generally in North Queensland
- Electricity generation, transmission and distribution

- Water Industry

Our Union is a branch of the Australian Services Union which is one of Australia's largest unions representing approximately 135 000 members.

Statement of Opposition:

The Services Union strongly opposes the newly introduced *Fighting Antisemitism and Keeping Guns Out of the Hands of Terrorists and Criminals Amendment Bill 2026* in its current form. We unequivocally condemn all forms of genuine racism, including antisemitism, Islamophobia, anti-Indigenous and anti-Palestinian racism, and we believe there is no hierarchy in racism. However, we believe this Bill is a dangerous overreach that threatens democratic freedoms, suppresses legitimate political dissent, and disproportionately targets communities advocating for Palestinian human rights.

Key Concerns:

- The Bill severely restricts freedom of political communication which is an implied right in the Australian Constitution.
- The Bill's scope is broad and creates extraordinary power to prescribe political speech.
- The explanatory notes seem to conflate antisemitism and legitimate political expression that seeks to educate and advocate for the Palestinian people.
- While the Bill itself does not specify Palestinians, the drafting of the bill and the accompanied media releases expose the disproportionate targeting of members of the Palestinian community and those standing against atrocities committed by the Israeli government. Palestinians are also part of a protected group under international law. The explanatory notes ignore Palestinian Human Rights and the right to self-determination.
- The Bill fails to acknowledge the growing public movement in Queensland in support of Palestinian rights. Addressing this legitimate sentiment with dialogue, rather than measures that seek to silence and erase Palestinian history, is essential for social cohesion.
- The Bill risks the erosion of public trust, therefore deepening division, by disproportionately targeting members of a particular ethnicity.
- The rushed nature of the Bill, with less than a week for public submissions, is an affront to the democratic process. Legislation that so significantly impacts minority groups requires deep consultation, not a rushed Bill that undermines the democratic principles of Australian society.

Conclusion:

The Services Union has consistently stood with minorities in the face of genuine hate and violence. Contrary to the claims of the Bill, it is not likely to be a successful mechanism that will safeguard the Jewish community but is likely to create further division and erosion of public trust.

The Bill is an overreach of political power and structurally biased. It risks criminalising legitimate political expression, suppressing advocacy for Palestinian rights and undermining civil liberties.

The Services Union strongly opposes this Bill as an attempt to restrict free speech and create extraordinary powers without proper democratic scrutiny. The Bill must be withdrawn to allow for a comprehensive review of its impact on civil liberties, political participation and the rule of law.

We call on the Committee to uphold and defend Australia's democratic foundations by safeguarding the fundamental right to political communication.

Neil Henderson
Secretary
The Services Union

