

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

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Cover Letter

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Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee
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Dear Committee,

Submission: *Fighting Antisemitism and Keeping Guns Out of the Hands of Terrorists and Criminals Amendment Bill 2026*

On behalf of the Village Support Limited (VSL), and the African Youth Support Council (AYSC), the youth advocacy branch, I make the following submission in relation to the *Fighting Antisemitism and Keeping Guns Out of the Hands of Terrorists and Criminals Amendment Bill 2026*.

Sincerely



Beny Bol OAM

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Summary

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

Opening Position

Village Support Limited (VSL) supports the *Fighting Antisemitism and Keeping Guns Out of the Hands of Terrorists and Criminals Amendment Bill 2026* as a vital measure to strengthen protections against hate speech and unlawful firearm access, promoting social cohesion, community safety, and inclusion across Queensland.

Hate Speech and Prohibited Symbols

VSL has documented increasing use of the “N-word” and dehumanising racial imagery in schools and public spaces. Such conduct discriminates, isolates, provokes, incites hostility and violence, and fragments social cohesion. Impacts include educational disengagement, psychological distress, marginalisation, and erosion of multicultural harmony. VSL recommends amending sections 52C and 52D of the Criminal Code to prohibit and make it a criminal offence the “N-word” and racially dehumanising symbols.

Firearms and Youth Protection

Rising youth involvement in weapon-related incidents highlights vulnerability to organised criminal networks. VSL recommends strengthening licensing exclusions, introducing minimum penalties for unlawful supply and possession, and tightening firearm prohibitions to deter criminal behaviour and protect community safety.

1. Opening Statement

Village Support Limited (VSL) is a Queensland-based community organisation, nationally recognised not-for-profit charity committed to supporting children, young people, adults, and families, particularly those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds to promote social cohesion, cultural inclusion, community safety, and youth empowerment. Our mission is to build cohesive, harmonious, peaceful and inclusive communities where every individual, regardless of race, faith, or background, feels safe, respected, and valued.

We strongly support the *Fighting Antisemitism and Keeping Guns Out of the Hands of Terrorists and Criminals Amendment Bill 2026*. While recent events, including the tragic terror attack in Westfield Bondi Junction, and the rise in antisemitism have profoundly affected the Australian Jewish community, this legislative moment presents an opportunity to strengthen protections for all Australians from any form of race- or faith-based hate.

VSL supports the Bill's objectives to:

- strengthen the prohibition of the public use of hate symbols.
- prohibit expressions used to incite discrimination, hostility or violence.
- protect community safety and social cohesion; and
- strengthen firearms regulation to deter criminal behaviour that endangers community safety.

Our submission focuses specifically on:

1. Inclusion of the "N-word" and racially dehumanising symbols as prohibited expressions; and
2. Strengthening firearm prohibitions and penalties to prevent access by young people and organised criminal networks.

2. Hate Speech, Prohibited Symbols and Community Safety

2.1. Background and Community Impact

A study on racism and discrimination in schools and workplaces by the VSL has documented the increasing use of the "N-word" symbol by some students, teachers, and members of the public. Its use is not incidental. It is deliberately deployed to discriminate, isolate, provoke, incite and promote hate based on race.

In Queensland schools and public spaces, the "N-word" and associated racialised imagery, including the drawing or display of a monkey to depict, mock and harass a Black person as equivalent to an animal or less than human, have caused significant harm to students of African background.

The consequences include:

- discrimination and humiliation in educational settings;
- social isolation and disengagement from education;
- exposure to crime and antisocial behaviour, heightening involvement with the justice system
- psychological distress and diminished sense of safety;
- fragmentation of social cohesion;
- incitement of hostility and violence; and
- erosion of multicultural harmony.

When racial hate speech becomes normalised in schools, it undermines not only individual wellbeing but broader community safety and social cohesion. Students who experience persistent racial discrimination often disengage from education, increasing vulnerability to marginalisation. In some cases, young people seek belonging elsewhere, including involvement in crime to feel belong, further compounding community harm. This aligns directly with the Bill's objective to:

- strengthen the prohibition of the public use of hate symbols;
- prohibit expressions used to incite discrimination, hostility or violence; and
- protect community safety and social cohesion.

2.2. Recommendations - Criminal Code Amendments

Village Support Limited recommends:

1. Amendment of Part 2 Section 52C (1A) - Prohibited Symbols (Prohibited Expression)

Insert the “N-word” as a prohibited expression or symbol where it is used to incite discrimination, hostility or violence towards a racial group.

2. Amendment of Section 52D – Display, Distribution or Publication of Prohibited Symbols

Insert the drawing and display of a monkey to depict, mock and harass a Black person as equivalent to an animal or less than human as a prohibited expression.

These amendments would ensure the law protects all communities equally from expressions that incite discrimination, hostility or violence.

Protecting one community from hate strengthens protection for all communities. A cohesive Queensland is one where nobody or community group feels unsafe because of who they are.

3. Strengthening Firearm Prohibitions and Protecting Young People

3.1. Background: Escalating Youth Weapon Incidents

Over the past five years, Queensland and other Australian jurisdictions have experienced a significant increase in incidents involving weapons and firearms used by young people.

VSL’s community engagement indicates:

- increasing vulnerability of young people to organised and sophisticated criminal gang networks;
- increasing number of youth accessing firearms through criminal associations;
- growing normalisation of weapons in youth-related conflicts;
- generalization of crime by a few to an entire community and
- devastating impact on families, young people and the entire community.

Access to weapons, particularly firearms, has intensified the severity of youth violence and criminal activity. The impact includes serious injury, trauma, family breakdown, and long-term harm to community safety and public confidence.

This directly aligns with the Bill’s objectives to:

- strengthen the effectiveness of the Firearm Prohibition Order (FPO) scheme;
- broaden the scope of history considered in firearms licensing decisions;
- impose the strongest maximum penalties in Australia for offences under the Weapons Act 1990; and
- deter criminal behaviour that endangers community safety.

3.2. Recommendations - Weapons Act 1990 Amendments

Village Support Limited recommends the following amendments:

1. Amendment of Section 10B - Fit and Proper Person (Licensees)

Expand criteria to explicitly exclude any person who:

- has been investigated for serious criminal activity;

- has been convicted of criminal offences including drug dealing, gang-related activities, distribution of weapons or drugs;
- has had association with organised criminal networks; or
- has been a member of any outlawed gang group or group involved in criminal activities.

Licences should never be issued to individuals who pose identifiable risks to community safety, regardless of citizenship status.

2. Amendment of Section 50B - Unlawful Supply of Weapons

Insert a minimum penalty of 10 years imprisonment, or a specified lengthy term that will serve as an effective deterrence.

3. Amendment of Section 50 - Possession of Weapons

Insert a minimum penalty of 7 years imprisonment, or a specified lengthy term that serves as an effective deterrence for unlawful possession of dangerous weapons.

These amendments may operate in conjunction with Section 141Y concerning acquiring, possessing and using firearms and firearms-related items.

Restricting access to firearms is essential to preventing organised criminal exploitation of vulnerable youth and protecting community safety.

4. Conclusion

Village Support Limited supports the Bill as a critical step toward strengthening protections against hate speech, prohibited symbols, and unlawful access to weapons.

We affirm that combating antisemitism must occur alongside protecting all Australians from race- and faith-based hate. Strong hate speech laws and robust firearms controls are necessary to promote, protect and sustain social cohesion and harmony so that every Queenslanders feels safe and included.

Queensland has the opportunity to enact laws that send a clear message: discrimination, incitement of violence, promotion of hatred, and criminal misuse of firearms have no place in our society.

5. Appearance Before the Committee

Village Support Limited respectfully requests the opportunity to appear before the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee to elaborate on this submission and provide further evidence from our community engagement and racism reporting.

We thank the Committee for the opportunity to contribute to this important inquiry.