

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

Submission No: 41

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I am a Queensland resident and civil liberties advocate concerned about the proposed hate speech provisions in this Bill, particularly the criminalisation of political expression and protest language. I strongly support measures to prevent violence and hatred in our community. However, I am concerned that the Bill's approach to hate speech may criminalise peaceful political speech and undermine the right to protest.

The Bill criminalises specific political phrases without clear intent thresholds.

The definitions of "menace, harassment or offence" are broad and subjective, inviting legal uncertainty.

Penalties of up to two years' imprisonment for political expression are disproportionate.

Laws should protect safety without unduly limiting peaceful political protest.

Criminal offences should be clear, necessary, and proportionate.

Political expression should not be penalised unless there is demonstrable incitement to unlawful conduct.

Recommendations

Laws should protect safety without unduly limiting peaceful political protest.

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Political expression should not be penalised unless there is demonstrable incitement to unlawful conduct.

Queensland can and should take firm action against antisemitism, hatred, and violence. At the same time, it is essential that legislative responses do not inadvertently erode the space for peaceful political expression and protest.

A free and democratic society must be capable of condemning hatred while preserving the fundamental ability of citizens to speak, assemble, and advocate for political change.

Thank you for considering this submission.

Yours faithfully,

D. R. Walsh.