

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

Submission No: 189

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Submission to the Committee

Re: Proposed Citizenship Requirement for Firearms Licensing

I support strong, evidence-based firearms regulation in Queensland. Measures that target criminal misuse of firearms and strengthen public safety deserve full backing.

However, I respectfully oppose the proposed requirement that only Australian citizens be eligible for firearms licensing.

1. Citizenship Does Not Improve Public Safety

Permanent residents:

- Have undergone comprehensive Commonwealth character and security checks.
- Hold indefinite visas subject to cancellation for serious misconduct.
- Are already subject to Queensland's full "fit and proper person" assessment.
- Must comply with identical licensing, storage and monitoring requirements as citizens.

Queensland's safeguards — criminal history checks, domestic violence screening, intelligence checks, genuine reason testing and ongoing compliance — are what protect the community.

Citizenship status does not alter any of these controls. Risk is determined by conduct and character, not nationality.

There is no evidence that vetted permanent residents present a higher risk than citizens. Absent evidence, this measure does not advance public safety.

2. Practical Impact — Including at Renewal

While the proposal may not operate retrospectively, it will materially affect permanent residents at the point of licence renewal.

A permanent resident who:

- Has lawfully held a licence for many years,
- Has complied with all storage and conduct requirements,
- Has never breached firearms legislation,

would become ineligible at renewal solely due to citizenship status.

This would remove licences from compliant, vetted individuals not because of misconduct or risk, but because of nationality. That outcome does not align with a risk-based regulatory framework.

3. It Targets the Wrong Cohort

If the objective is stronger law and order outcomes, regulatory focus should remain on:

- Illegal firearms trafficking.
- Organised crime.
- Violent offending.
- Storage non-compliance.

A citizenship requirement instead impacts individuals who have already:

- Passed federal migration vetting.
- Passed Queensland licensing vetting.
- Demonstrated lawful compliance.

It imposes restrictions on low-risk, compliant residents rather than addressing criminal misuse.

4. Unintended Consequences

Queensland has many long-term permanent residents who:

- Live and work in regional communities.
- Operate farms and small businesses.
- Contribute to sporting and community organisations.
- Pay taxes and comply fully with Australian law.

Many do not pursue citizenship for personal or administrative reasons. Excluding them from eligibility — particularly at renewal — treats them differently despite identical vetting standards and identical risk profiles.

This may also have practical implications for regional Queensland, agriculture and legitimate sporting participation — without delivering measurable safety benefits.

5. Recommendation

I respectfully recommend that the proposed citizenship requirement be removed from the Bill, or amended to preserve eligibility for permanent residents who satisfy all existing licensing criteria.

Queensland's firearms framework is already robust. Public safety is best served by focusing on criminal behaviour and illegal firearms, not by imposing additional barriers on vetted, law-abiding residents.

Thank you for considering this submission.

Philip McAleese