

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

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Submission By: Rhys Bosley

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I generally support both the measures to prevent hateful expression in the bill and the approach to gun laws, which is to target criminals. I have the following specific comments:

1. The banning of "From the River to the Sea" and "Globalise the Intifada", as well as terrorist symbols, is perfectly reasonable and not an undue interference in free speech. Those statements and symbols are used to dog whistle, to call for the violent destruction of the State of Israel and have morphed into anti-Semitism. Banning them is no different to the former Labor Government's banning of Nazi symbols and gestures.
2. Despite their complaints Pro-Palestinian protesters will maintain the same right to protest that any other Australian protester will, but they are quite reasonably expected to do so lawfully. That includes not turning a blind eye to anti-Semitism within their ranks. Politicians who support those movements have a responsibility to set those expectations, rather than pandering to the desire of extremists and thrill-seekers, to act in a disrespectful, intimidatory and/or violent manner.
3. However, politicians such as Mr Russo and Mr Berkman on your committee, who have both weighed in on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, do need to consider whether or not they are really doing their job as state politicians by doing so. That conflict is one of about 30 active conflicts in the World at the moment, there is nothing special about it that warrants state politicians to do any more than to help constituents who are affected by it, within the remit of the state's role.

The only reason the conflict gets attention is that it is a 1400 year religious conflict, with some people from that region thinking they have the right to bring that fight to Australia. Many if not the majority of Queenslanders are sick of this. State politicians who virtue signal to groups of voters on that matter, need to consider whether their actions are consistent with their responsibilities with respect to maintaining social cohesion in Queensland.

On gun laws, I am a recreational shooter and a hunting advocate and I have the following points.

1. I would like to put on the record my extraordinary resentment, at the way that Steven Miles and Cameron Dick have characterised our community in Parliament and online. Miles, our alternative Premier, has called government members who support shooters "cookers" and "far right", by implication labelling our entire community in the same manner. Cameron Dick said we are racists in Parliament and repeatedly used the phrase "you can't be tough on crime if you are soft on guns", despite the fact that firearms crime in Queensland is overwhelmingly conducted with illegal firearms. I do not appreciate the implication that we are somehow criminals in waiting.

The irony of these two men's treatment of us, is that there are multiple Labor Party MPs who have courted the recreational shooting community in their electorates. It is a massive recreational pastime that many working-class Queenslanders enjoy. As an example I learned to shoot from my grandfather who was a life member of the New Zealand Labour Party and there are many recreational shooters amongst trade unionists. Miles and Dick have just attacked many of the very sort of people who the Labor movement was established to protect.

Furthermore, if the wrong sort of people such as criminals or extremists do try to infiltrate the law-abiding shooting community, who do these two men think is going to be the best source of intelligence to stop them? It is us, law abiding shooters of course, so alienating us from government out of fear that we will suffer discrimination if we report problems, is incredibly irresponsible.

Miles and Dick owe Queensland recreational shooters an apology for the way that they have treated us. We are repeatedly told that firearms ownership is a privilege in Australia which is true, but that does not mean that politicians have the right to walk all over us, out of bigotry and political opportunism.

2. More generally on all sides of politics, discussions about the actual risks associated with firearms ownership in politics, need to be more proportionate. The year of the Wieambella Massacre, 2022, there were four-gun homicides in Queensland out of over 6000 avoidable deaths, with the vast majority of gun homicides not being committed by license holders. There were nearly 300 road deaths that year, as another basis of comparison.

With respect to gun suicides, the evidence has shown that when gun ownership has fallen, other methods of suicide replace them. I support the Queensland Government acting to reduce suicides, but that can only occur by preventatively helping potential victims, not by taking away just one suicide method.

It serves no purpose for politicians, activists and the media to cause the general public to be unnecessarily fearful, over lawful firearms which are an incredibly infrequent cause of death. With the commentary gone on, we have Queenslanders who are fearful that there are guns locked in safes in their neighbourhood. They should not have to suffer that fear, for the sake of opportunistic fear mongering about inanimate objects.

Debate about gun regulation should be informed and the policy responses should be proportionate and appropriately targeted. I commend the Queensland Government for adopting such an approach in this bill.

3. The need for the Queensland Government properly administer firearms regulation, cannot be overemphasised. I have held a firearms license since 2012 and have had to correct the registry, with firearms that I have purchased either not having been recorded, or firearms that I have sold still being registered under my name. Since the strong consensus is that firearms regulation is important for public safety, there should be no excuses by public servants for not administering it correctly.

Thankyou for the opportunity to comment.