

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

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Submission to the Community Safety and Legal Affairs Committee.

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

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1. Introduction

Brisbane Muslim Fellowship Inc is an Incorporated Association and registered Charity that was established in 2017 to provide a support network for Muslim Converts that includes mentoring, education and guidance to ensure they have the essential knowledge and practices required for their spiritual well being and fit confidently in the wider community. We are deeply concerned about the potential legal and social impact of aspects of this Bill.

2. Our Position on the Bill

Although we support keeping guns out of the hands of the wrong people, we strongly oppose certain elements of the newly introduced Fighting Antisemitism and Keeping Guns Out of the Hands of Terrorists and Criminals Amendment Bill 2026.

As Australian citizens and as Muslims, we unequivocally condemn all forms of racism, including antisemitism, anti-Islam hate, anti-Indigenous racism, and anti-Palestinian racism. We firmly believe there is no hierarchy in racism— all bigotry must be challenged with equal force.

However, we are deeply concerned that this Bill represents a dangerous overreach that threatens democratic freedoms. Rather than genuinely combating hatred, it risks suppressing legitimate political dissent and disproportionately targeting communities advocating for Palestinian human rights.

3. Key Concerns

3.1 Problems with How the Law is Written

- **Vague Rules:** The bill allows the government to ban words by making a regulation, instead of clearly listing them in the law itself. This means the rules could change over time and are uncertain.
- **Risk of Government Abuse:** The power to ban political speech is too broad and lacks oversight. Future governments could potentially abuse this power.
- **Hurts Political Debate:** The bill restricts the implied right to freedom of political communication in the Australian Constitution. It could unintentionally punish people for legitimate protest and political discussion, especially if they offend someone rather than directly encourage violence.
- **Unfair Police Powers:** The bill gives police the power to search people without a warrant for these new speech offenses. This is a major invasion of privacy which seems designed to scare people away from protests.

3.2 Unfair Impact on Specific Communities

- **Banning specific words ignores their normal meanings in languages like Arabic (e.g., the word 'intifada').**
- **Banning certain political phrases (e.g., "From the river to the sea") ignores the actual meaning ascribed to them as it means equal rights to everyone living between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea. It is wrong to accept that these phrases offend certain groups without context and ignoring the fact that the governing political party in Israel also uses this phrase.**
- **Disproportionately Targets Palestinians:** While the bill is officially about antisemitism, the public announcements focused on phrases used in pro-Palestinian protests. This creates a perception that it is designed to unfairly target Palestinians and their advocates.

- **Ignores Palestinian Rights:** The bill conflates antisemitism with legitimate advocacy for Palestinian human rights and self-determination. It ignores the rights of Palestinians, who are also a protected group.
- **Silences a Genuine Movement:** The bill fails to recognize the growing public movement in Queensland supporting Palestinian rights. Instead of criminalizing this sentiment, the government should be engaging in dialogue.
- **Erodes Trust and Deepens Division:** By being seen to target a particular ethnicity, the bill risks damaging community trust and increasing social division.

3.3 Human Rights and Fairness Concerns

- **Rights Violation Not Justified:** The government hasn't shown that these harsh measures are the only way to achieve its goal. Less extreme options should be considered first, as required by the Human Rights Act.
- **Unequal Protection:** The bill focuses on only one type of prejudice (antisemitism) while ignoring others like anti Muslim hate or racism against Indigenous Australians. To be fair, laws should protect all communities equally.
- **Flawed and Rushed Process:** The public was given less than a week to comment on such a significant bill. This is an affront to the democratic process and prevents proper consultation with the communities that will be most affected.

4. Recommendations

Our specific requests to the Committee are:

1. Extend the consultation period to allow for proper scrutiny of the proposed laws.
2. Ensure the law protects all communities equally, not just one group.
3. Avoid blanket bans on political language and make sure the context of what is said is always considered.
4. Consider whether less restrictive legislative alternatives could achieve the stated objective. Safeguard legitimate religious and cultural expression.
5. Separate and technically future-proof firearms reforms.

5. Conclusion

We support efforts to combat hatred in all forms and stand in solidarity with all communities facing discrimination:

- We oppose the Bill: It is an overreach of political power, is structurally biased, and creates extraordinary powers without proper democratic oversight.
- It won't achieve its goal: The Bill will not effectively safeguard the Jewish community. Instead, it is likely to create more division and erode public trust.
- It unfairly targets free speech: The Bill risks criminalizing legitimate political expression and suppressing advocacy for Palestinian rights, which undermines basic civil liberties.
- Good laws need certain qualities: To be effective, any law must be carefully written, clearly defined, applied evenly to everyone, sensitive to context, and proportionate to the actual harm it is trying to stop.

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

Yours faithfully,



Imran Andrew Price
President