


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

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Felicity Jodell (Ms)



Before retirement, I was employed as a Language and Learning Advisor in several universities, most recently in a faculty at QUT. With teaching qualifications and a Master of Applied Linguistics (TESOL), I worked closely with international students in Australia and overseas, as well as migrants from many backgrounds. As an active member of Amnesty International, I developed an ever-strengthening conviction not only that the human rights of all groups are fundamental to society but that all forms of genuine racism are to be condemned. There is no hierarchy of racial groups.

I oppose the newly introduced Fighting Antisemitism and Keeping Guns Out of the Hands of Terrorist and Criminal Amendment Bill 2026 in its current form. To my mind, this Bill reaches too far, endangering democratic freedoms. It also suppresses legitimate political dissent, and its targeting of communities advocating for Palestinian rights is out of proportion.

First, in the Australian Constitution, by implication, there is the right to freedom of political communication, yet this bill appears to restrict that freedom. The broad scope and the creation of powers without scrutiny to prescribe what is and what is not political speech, could well enable Queensland governments to abuse those powers. Democracy safeguards must be articulated in this amendment bill.

To my mind, many Australians know little about Middle Eastern countries and their various histories, cultures and politics. (I have tried to increase my own knowledge, particularly in recent years.) I believe this ignorance may contribute to confusion about the true meaning of various terms, thus making it easier to conflate concepts such as antisemitism and the legitimate political expression that tries to educate and advocate for the Palestinians. On page three of the explanatory notes, the existence of dual meanings is acknowledged, but surely an important, authoritative documents such as this Parliamentary Bill should contain accurate terminology.

This amendment draft and accompanying media releases expose the targeting of members of the Palestinian community and those, like me, who stand against atrocities committed by the Israeli government and its defence forces. The rights of us all, including Palestinians, are protected by International Law. There is a growing number of Queenslanders who support the rights of Palestinians, and for the sake of social cohesion, these Queenslanders' sentiments must be acknowledged and expressed in a dialogue, not silenced and erased. Public trust is eroded, and society is further divided when one group is singled out. The bill in its current form clearly risks this and, as such, is unlikely to safeguard the Jewish community. Furthermore, the short time allowed for public submissions is unfair. Such an important matter needs deep consultation which obviously takes time. In view of these concerns, I strongly urge that the Bill be withdrawn and thoroughly reviewed.

Yours respectfully and sincerely,  
Felicity Jodell

