

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

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TO: Queensland Parliamentary Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee

REGARDING: *Fighting Antisemitism and Keeping Guns Out of the Hands of Terrorists and Criminals Amendment Bill 2026 (Qld)*

DATE: 16 February 2026

FROM:

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SUBMISSION

I make this submission as an individual. The views expressed are mine solely and do not represent the views of any organisation with which I am associated.

As an Australian citizen, I am concerned about a number of changes to the Criminal Code and other legislation proposed under the Fighting Antisemitism and Keeping Guns out of the Hands of Terrorists and Criminals Amendment Bill 2026, specifically with respect to changes relating to prohibited symbols and expressions.

Key concerns

I hold strong concerns regarding changes to section 52(c) of the *Criminal Code Act 1899* (Qld) to include symbols and expressions used by a prescribed organisation, or a member of a prescribed organisation, to identify the organisation or any part of the organisation. Such a clause does not sufficiently account for different interpretations and expressions of symbols and phrases as holding different meanings to different persons and groups. For example, a phrase, such as "From the River to the Sea", may be co-opted by a terrorist organisation for hateful purposes; where its generally accepted meaning by others, such as human rights activists, has been a peaceful protest for the freedom of persons facing a genocide. This proposed clause should be amended to recognise that use of a symbol or expression by one individual or group in one manner does not define all other uses of that expression or symbol. Rather, use should be considered in each context and consideration given broadly to the human rights of all affected persons.

I am also concerned about the increased powers amendments to the *Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000* (Qld) will provide police, specifically the power for police officers to stop, detain and search persons and vehicles without warrant where the police officer reasonably suspects a person has committed, or is committing, an offence (that is, displaying a prohibited symbol or using a prohibited expression). It is reasonably foreseeable, particularly in the wake of police violence in Sydney against persons peacefully protesting Israeli President Herzog's visit, that such powers may result in police unnecessarily searching and detaining Queenslanders engaging in legitimate protest. Such actions are likely to place an unjustifiable limitation on the human rights of Queenslanders, as prescribed under the *Human Rights Act 2019* (Qld), specifically:

- The right to protection from torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment (section 17)
- The right to freedom of expression (section 21)
- The right to peaceful assembly and freedom of association (section 22)

- Property rights (section 24)
- The right to liberty and security of person (section 29).

Furthermore, the focus of the Bill on antisemitism specifically (as indicated in its name and the policy objectives included in the Explanatory Notes) does not account for the diversity of our Queensland community. This focus indicates the potential for the Minister to preference the views of Jewish and/or Israeli persons' views on what is considered offensive or discriminatory when making decisions regarding banned symbols and expressions. What may be deemed as offensive by some members of the Jewish and/or Israeli community, may however be a legitimate call for the respect of Palestinian persons' human rights. To avoid this bias, the Bill should be amended to refer to discrimination more broadly, rather than giving specific mention to antisemitism.

In conclusion, the aforementioned changes present an unreasonable threat to the human rights of many in our community, with grave potential to silence legitimate free speech by marginalised groups. I strongly encourage further amendments to the Bill to clarify its focus on upholding the human rights of all persons.

Kind regards,

Peta Fraser