

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

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I write as an Arab woman, a mother, an academic, a union member, an immigrant, and an active member of my community. I strongly oppose the Fighting Antisemitism and Keeping Guns Out of the Hands of Terrorists and Criminals Amendment Bill 2026 in its current form. I unequivocally condemn antisemitism and all forms of racism including Islamophobia, anti-Indigenous, anti-Arab, anti-Black, anti-Asian and anti-Palestinian racism. Every community deserves safety and dignity. However, this Bill does not make me or my children feel safer. Instead, it makes me feel targeted and unsafe to exist in a State that I love and have called home for almost the past decade. As a mother, I want my children to grow up in a country where they can express their political views without fear of criminalisation. I want them to feel that their heritage is to be celebrated and is not treated as a threat. Advocacy for their human rights should not be equated with hate.

As someone who cares deeply about justice and human rights, I am concerned that this Bill risks restricting freedom of political communication, a fundamental aspect of Australia's democracy, and is an overreach that threatens democratic freedoms and suppresses legitimate political dissent. Its broad drafting conflates genuine antisemitism with legitimate advocacy for Palestinian human rights. While Palestinians are not explicitly named, the language and surrounding public commentary suggest that members of my community and those who speak out about Palestinian suffering may be disproportionately affected.

I am also deeply concerned about the rushed nature of this Bill. Allowing less than a week for public submissions on legislation that significantly affects minority communities undermines the democratic process. This process would not meet accepted Australian standards for ethical conduct involving human participants, as reflected in The Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2018) and the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2023), which require rigorous ethical review, genuine merit, transparency, and informed participation. I urge the Committee to withdraw the Bill and undertake meaningful consultation to ensure that efforts to combat racism do not come at the expense of democratic freedoms and civil liberties.