



Speech By
Bisma Asif

MEMBER FOR SANDGATE

Record of Proceedings, 3 March 2026

**FIGHTING ANTISEMITISM AND KEEPING GUNS OUT OF THE HANDS OF
TERRORISTS AND CRIMINALS AMENDMENT BILL 2026**

 **Ms ASIF** (Sandgate—ALP) (8.37 pm): I rise to speak on the Fighting Antisemitism and Keeping Guns out of the Hands of Terrorists and Criminals Amendment Bill 2026. I want to start by acknowledging the 15 innocent lives lost at the Bondi Beach terror attack on 14 December. My thoughts are with those impacted, their families, their loved ones and our Australian Jewish community. This was a vile act of anti-Semitism and the kind of hatred and violence that has no place in Australia, in Queensland or anywhere in the world.

In the days that followed, what was visible was fear in our communities—fear from Jewish Australians who were afraid to leave home, afraid to show people who they were; fear from Muslim Australians who were bracing for the backlash they knew would come. There was fear across both communities—parents searching for words to explain to their children why people who look a certain way, pray a certain way and speak a certain way were the target of this horrific attack, and that is no easy task for any parent. What also happened in the days following the event was the Bald Hills mosque in my community—a place of worship, a place of community and peace—was vandalised. White supremacist symbols were spray-painted across the walls and death threats were made. We know that this was no random attack; it was a targeted attack full of hatred directed at Muslim Australians in the wake of a terrorist attack that killed Jewish Australians.

Queensland is a proud multicultural state. In our suburbs across the state you will find families from every corner of the globe—all of them Queenslanders, all of them contributing to the fabric of our state and who we are. In recent times multiculturalism feels like a bit of a political buzzword—a political talking point—but it actually represents humans and people in our community. It represents people who may have a different background, a different skin colour, who speak a different language or who practise faith differently to some of us. They could be doctors who are trained in my suburb of Bracken Ridge or they could be people who operate small businesses across our communities. It is children in our schools who speak different languages at home and it is our sportspeople in Australia who represent Australia across the world. It is our synagogues, our mosques, our temples, our churches—all of them part of our community.

Our diversity is our strength and it broadens our perspective, deepens the fabric of our state and strengthens our economy, but that fabric is under threat, and it is not under threat from the fringes; it is also being encouraged deliberately and cynically by political figures who have decided that division is good for their career. When extremist behaviour and hatred are left unchecked and left to fester, you see horrific terror attacks, racist rallies and calls for the deportation of Australian citizens because of their religion, their skin colour or their cultural identity. We need a government that calls out these behaviours, not a government that panders to them because they are chasing the far-right votes or because they are trying to out-Pauline Pauline Hanson. Pauline Hanson, who sits in our national parliament, said that there are no good Muslims, and let me be unambiguous about what that statement has said: it is hatred; it is vilification.

Honourable members interjected.

Ms ASIF: I take that interjection. The relevance to this is we are debating a bill about racism. We are debating a bill that has attacked Jewish community members in Australia, so it is very relevant to say—

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Ms ASIF: Mr Deputy Speaker, I raise a point of order with regard to personal offence and I ask that that be withdrawn.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Lister): Member for Nanango, will you withdraw.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I am happy to show the proof, but I withdraw.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Nanango, it must be an unconditional withdrawal.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I withdraw.

Ms ASIF: That is how you get white supremacist symbols graffitied on our synagogues and our mosques and walls and that is how the hatred moves to reality. We know that attacks on our Jewish community have gone up exponentially. We also know that the Islamophobia Register Australia has recorded a 740 per cent increase in reports since the Bondi terror attack, most of those from Muslim women who have been spat on, abused, attacked and threatened in public places. Just a few weeks ago this was evident in Wynnum where a teenager was attacked by a member of the public. Every single Queenslanders deserves to feel safe in their homes, in their places of worship, on our streets and when they are celebrating their religious holidays like Hanukkah. That commitment cannot be selective; it must be for everyone.

Everyone deserves to pray, attend religious festivals and display their religious symbols without fear of violence. On 14 December that safety was ripped away for Jewish Australians in a senseless act of violence and meaningful action is needed, and the Labor opposition supports the measures in this bill that respond to that. With regard to the creation of specific offences for attacking a religious minister, for vandalising a place of worship, for disturbing religious worship and for intimidating or obstructing persons entering or leaving places of worship, these measures are something that we have been calling for and they are something that our communities have been calling for. They mean that when synagogues are defaced or when a car rams through their gates there will be a criminal action attached to that. It means that when there are death threats for people who are looking to worship who are attending a mosque, there will be a criminal action, and we absolutely support the right of every Queenslanders to practise their faith without fear. We also note that, while this bill is directed at anti-Semitism, its protections apply—

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Ms ASIF: Mr Deputy Speaker, I raise a point of order. I take personal offence and I ask that that be withdrawn.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Nanango, will you withdraw.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I withdraw.

Ms ASIF: The bill also expands the prohibited symbols framework to include symbols of terrorist organisations and state sponsors of terrorism. The Labor opposition supports this provision, but we urge the government to take careful—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Member for Sandgate, I regret to interrupt you, but there is quarrelling across the chamber that I can hear quite clearly, member for Waterford and Attorney-General. That is to cease. The member is not taking interjections. She will be heard in silence.

Ms ASIF: Thank you for your protection, Mr Deputy Speaker. A number of stakeholders have raised concerns with the potential misidentification of the Shahada. The Shahada is an Islamic declaration of faith. It is one of the Five Pillars of Islam recited in the daily prayers. It is a deeply sacred expression of belief for Muslims around the world. Regrettably, extremist organisations such as ISIS and Hamas have coopted this written Arabic script on their flags. The calligraphed Shahada is regularly and legitimately displayed by law-abiding organisations across the world and across Queensland and we must not allow law enforcement to misidentify sincere religious expression as a prohibited symbol.

Further education, community awareness and clear police guidance must occur so that law-abiding Queenslanders are not caught up in this misidentification, so I urge that there be resources for education put in place to make sure that innocent Queenslanders who are practising their faith are not a target of this misidentification.

If the Premier truly does care about addressing religious and racial vilification, the government would not have paused the racial vilification reforms which were put in place by the former government. That was one of the first things the LNP government did when it came into power, so if it truly believed that this needs to happen—and I wish that it did, because every Queenslander deserves those protections and those strengthened penalties—I urge that this not be the last step. I urge that when it sees things out in public it calls them out. When it sees racist marches happening in our streets, call them out and say that those are not acceptable. When we see people like Pauline Hanson saying that there are no good—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr de BRENNI: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Sandgate, would you please resume your seat. I can imagine what your point of order might be, Manager of Opposition Business.

Mr de BRENNI: Yes, Mr Deputy Speaker. The standing orders make it very clear that members are to be heard in silence. You ruled on interjections by the Attorney-General. I recollect that you may have provided her a warning and I submit to you that further action is required in terms of this grossly disorderly conduct.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Springwood. As far as I can see, honestly I do not think that the member is targeting anyone specifically in the chamber. I do not think that that response was appropriate. The member will be heard in silence and I will be warning members under the standing orders if there are any further interruptions, and that goes for everyone.

Ms ASIF: I know those opposite have an issue with me standing with our multicultural communities and calling out hatred and racism, but I will not stop doing it. I will not stop because I stand with every single multicultural community in—

Mr KEMPTON: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is no point of order. The member was responding to some interjections just then, but be mindful of the contents of the bill and I ask you to remain relevant to it.

Ms ASIF: In closing, I want to say to every member of our multicultural community—to our Jewish community, to our Muslim community and to every community that has faced racism, vilification and the threat of extremism: I stand with you and I will not stop calling out this dangerous behaviour which puts you at risk. Multiculturalism and inclusivity are amongst our greatest strengths. When every Queenslander—regardless of their background, their faith, their skin colour—feels valued, respected and safe, we are a stronger and a better state, and that is something that I hope this government will continue to take seriously.