

Re : QUESTION ON NOTICE

Good Morning Ben

Below is the Question on Notice asked by Paul Lynch at the Public Hearing

Mr PAUL LYNCH: Mr Andjelkovic, one of the submissions the Committee has received requested an expansion of section 22K of the bill so that companies that produce or process food and obtain Halal certification are protected against anti-Halal movements and the discrimination that goes with it.

Do you have a view on that?

Mr ANDJELKOVIC: That would be a technical question. I defer that to Dr Kafataris as per Bishop Siluan's instructions.

Dr KAFATARIS: Can I ask you to clarify your question?

Ms JENNY LEONG: Point of order: I wish to clarify and ensure the witnesses are aware that they are also able to take these comments on notice, recognising the specific clashes with other commitments and duties.

Mr PAUL LYNCH: I am perfectly relaxed if you take it on notice

Mr ANDJELKOVIC: I can take that question on notice.

Answer from Mr Andjelkovic

Thank You for The Question Mr Lynch as per my Letter of Authority from Bishop Siluan I am here on behalf of the Serbian Orthodox Church.

I am not aware of which specific submission that you are referring to.

Also, I am not sure what discriminatory treatment companies that process or produce food and obtain Halal certification say they have experienced, and what protections specifically they are looking for.

Public Criticism (of Halal Certification or Halal Slaughter methods) *per se* is not discrimination, also Providing Consumer Information and Choice to Consumers in a free Market economy is also not discrimination.

Therefore, I do not see the need to expand the definitions provided under Section 22K

Mr ANDJELKOVIC: That would be a technical question. I defer that to Dr Kafataris as per Bishop Siluan's instructions.

Dr Kafataris Answer

The issue of halal certification and production of halal food is different to the kind of issues that would be covered by religious belief and a 'religious ethos organisation'. It is entirely possible for a commercial enterprise to provide such certification and service to the general public for a profit and by entities that have no affiliation at all with a religious body, even if the directors of that corporation attend a mosque.

Opposition to halal certification is opposition to an ideology not an individual so my comments to the committee regarding vilification would also apply here. Just as it is perfectly reasonable to oppose Islam and its doctrines as an ideology but respect Muslims as people, it is just as reasonable for someone to oppose halal as an idea but respect a halal butcher as a person.

Kind Regards

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