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MEDIA RELEASE

Report tabled – Joint Select Committee recommends protections for religious discrimination

The Joint Select Committee has today released its report examining the Anti-Discrimination Amendment (Religious Freedoms and Equality) Bill 2020 (the Bill).

The Bill aimed to provide new protections from religious discrimination. The inquiry into the Bill sparked strong community engagement, receiving 192 submissions and over 19,000 online survey submissions. These submissions represented a wide range of views from religious leaders and community groups, legal experts, academic, health professionals and advocates for women and the LGBTIQ community.

The Hon. Gabrielle Upton MP, Chair of the Committee, stated, "This inquiry raised complex issues about religious beliefs and activities which go to the core of who we are as individuals and indeed what we do as community members."

The Committee made a number of findings and recommendations – primarily that there was a strong need to protect people from discrimination on the grounds of religious beliefs and activities.

The Chair stated: "A majority of the Committee found that there was also a need to protect not-for-profit religious organisations from discrimination on the grounds of religious beliefs or activities when they engage in certain conduct because of their religious doctrines, tenets, beliefs or teachings."

A majority of the Committee also recommended that the NSW Government introduce its own bill providing such protections by the end of 2021.

In making these recommendations, the Chair said "It is my strong expectation that the important issue of protection from religious discrimination can finally be addressed through a Government Bill, thereby improving the lives of people in NSW."

More information on the inquiry including the report, submissions and hearing transcripts, is on the Committee's [webpage](#).

Media: The Hon. Gabrielle Upton MP, Committee Chair – (02) 9326 1856