

**Submission
No 96**

**ANTI-DISCRIMINATION AMENDMENT (RELIGIOUS FREEDOMS AND
EQUALITY) BILL 2020**

Name: Joseph Camenzuli

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Submission in support of the Joint Select Committee on the Anti-Discrimination Amendment (Religious Freedoms and Equality) Bill 2020

Dear Committee,

I would like to express my full support for the anti discrimination amendment earmarked by Mark Latham.

I believe it achieves its purpose of extending protections against discrimination beyond existing categories of citizenship and identity in New South Wales to people of religious faith and non-faith. The word "equality" is included in the title to reflect the equal standing to be given to matters of faith and spirituality in the coverage of the State's anti-discrimination laws. Religious discrimination is an issue no government can ignore. In the past whenever discrimination has emerged in society, governments have legislated to outlaw such practices. This is how Federal and State anti-discrimination Acts emerged and evolved over time to quite rightly protect the rights of the elderly, disabled, carers, women and the transgender and gay communities. All forms of discrimination in society are bad. All forms of discrimination should be outlawed.

Yet now the fastest growing form of discrimination in our society is against people of religious faith, especially Christians. We have all seen the high-profile cases of Israel Folau and Margaret Court, outstanding Australians treated like second-class citizens because they take a literal interpretation of the *Bible*—the most important, influential and popular book in history; the book that has given civil society much of its moral code, our understanding of right and wrong; the book that stands today as one of the essential pillars of Western civilisation. Those who quote from the *Bible* should not be hounded from the public square as Folau and Mrs Court have been. All religious faith that respects the sanctity of life and the goodness of the human soul and reaches out to others with the hope of salvation and compassion should be honoured in our society.

I am particularly concerned about the case of the wedding magazine run by Christians that was forced to close down because of third party advertising boycotts. We know of the Coopers Brewery boycott, punishing Christians for sponsoring a debate between Federal MPs on same-sex marriage. We know the case of the senior executive at a New South Wales accounting firm who was forced to resign from the board of the Australian Christian Lobby due to activist campaigning. We know of the Christian medical practitioners stripped of their accreditation for failing to surrender to the gender fluidity movement. We know of the academic sacked at Macquarie University because he was a director of the Lachlan Macquarie Institute Limited, a Christian training organisation. We know of university admittance

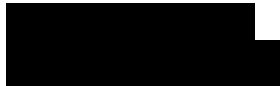
rules that discriminate against people of faith, especially Muslims and Christians, who refuse to accept the new left-wing political meaning of "diversity and inclusion".

We know of the workers fired for standing by their Christian beliefs and refusing to support anything other than traditional male-female marriage. We know of employers trying to control all aspects of their workers' lives, including their religious beliefs away from work. We know of the big corporate sponsors, like Qantas, trying to control sporting codes through the back door and relegate the importance of religious rights. We know of the multinational companies that have refused to allow staff to wear Christian crosses at work as part of their.

The Parliament has no reason to delay, no reason not to stand up for religious rights. This Bill is purely about protection against religious discrimination. It covers all denominations: Christians, Jews, Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, Sikhs and others, and indeed agnostics and atheists. The bill is about inclusion—real, full-on, genuine, 100 per cent inclusion. Not selective inclusion but, rather, giving all people in New South Wales equal protection at law.

Regards,

Joseph Camenzuli



20 August 2020