

**Submission  
No 121**

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

**Name:** Claire Lawson

**Date Received:** 17 August 2020

Dear committee,

I have lived overseas. I have worked in countries that do not have the basic human right of religious freedom. I value our society, and our religious freedom. .  
Therefore, I support the amendments as proposed by Mark Latham for the following reasons

\* We need the protections provided by this Bill because there is an increasing intolerance of, and antipathy towards, people of faith. This is reflected in rising rates of islamophobia and antisemitism, and the push to marginalise or even punish the expression of a Christian viewpoint in public. This is not acceptable.

- It is not appropriate that citizens in NSW could be denied service in a shop or a contractor sacked because of their religious beliefs and have no legal recourse. This is blatant discrimination based on religious belief.

- NSW is out of step with most other States and Territories, because it does not protect its citizens against religious discrimination. One of the recommendations of the Ruddock Review was that NSW should include religious belief and activity as a protected attribute. We can and should implement this now.

- I could not support the Bill if the differential treatment of “religious ethos organisations” was removed. It is necessary that religious institutions be allowed to pursue their religious purposes by preferencing those who share the same religion in employment and in certain other contexts, and the proposed section 22M does this very well.

- We support the Bill’s protection of “private” expressions of religious belief, by prohibiting adverse action on the basis of religious belief expressed outside the workplace / professional / institutional context. This is necessary, subject to limited and clearly defined exceptions, because employers, qualifying bodies and educational institutions are increasingly imposing codes of conduct that improperly restrict private religious activity.

- We support the inclusion of a new clause 3, because it will ensure that all rights are treated equally. We do not seek special rights for people of faith, but want religious belief to be treated on par with other “protected attributes”.

- We support clause 22Z, which prevents the State from discrimination on the basis of religious. The State should be neutral towards religion, and so should not be able to impose conditions in funding contracts that exclude some religious bodies from the receipt of funding, or else force them to act inconsistently with their religious ethos

Please protect our rights as Human... and do not let our society discriminate on the basis of religion. Our forefathers fought and died for our freedom in 2 world wars. - this includes religious freedom. Do not squander our priveledges that we have here in Australian and in NSW by allowing religious discrimination to permeated our society.

Regards  
Claire Lawson

