



Hate crime law review a landmark moment for Queensland communities

The Cohesive Communities Coalition, representing over 20 of Queensland's diverse ethnic and religious communities, has welcomed the Palaszczuk's Government's referral of the state's vilification and hate crime laws to a parliamentary committee for review.

"This a landmark moment for the Queensland community, for every person who has experienced abuse or crime fuelled by discriminatory hatred. We thank the Government and Parliament for embracing our community call," said co-chair Rita Jabri-Markwell.

"We are a naturally diverse state, that's a fact, but updating our laws will help us to be a truly inclusive state."

The Coalition launched their [#BetterLaws4SafeQld](#) campaign last year to advocate for stronger protections for the state's diverse communities from hate incidents and crime, after an increase in anti-Asian incidents tied to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Queensland Parliament will consider the Coalition's Options Paper, 'Serious vilification and hate crime: The need for legislative reform', which recommends clearer laws and penalties for hate crimes, options for victim protection, as well as measures to improve the way hate crimes are policed like a new community scrutiny panel. .

"Our laws need to be fit for modern times, to recognise conduct for what it truly is and deliver real victim protection" said Peter Forday, fellow Co-Chair of the Coalition.

"Every Queenslanders should feel that reporting hate incidents and crime is worth the effort, but that means our laws need to be there to provide the right protection."

Community organisations say that not only are hate crimes under-reported, but that the incidence of hate crimes is actually increasing.

Queensland Human Rights Commissioner Scott McDougall also welcomed the review.

“We know Queensland’s current laws on hate speech and vilification are inadequate for a number of reasons,” says Mr McDougall.

“There are a number of gaps in the protections they offer, they aren’t utilised enough by law enforcement, they are not fit for purpose in combatting the distribution or display of hate material – and there are low levels of reporting and community confidence in their efficacy. This review will be an opportunity to shine a light on those shortcomings and hear from communities about what reform is needed in order for everyone to feel safe and welcome.”

The Coalition will be encouraging as many submissions as possible from across the Queensland community to the inquiry.

- **ENDS**

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More information

[*Serious vilification and hate crime: The need for legislative reform*](#) – options paper by Cohesive Communities Coalition.

[“Muslims attending mosques during holy month of Ramadan fear ongoing hate crimes”](#) ABC News – featuring Ali Kadri, leader of Brisbane’s Holland Park Mosque and member of the Cohesive Communities Coalition.

[“Losing my religion: how did a sacred Sanskrit symbol become a hate emblem?”](#) – guest blog post by Akashika Mohla for the State Library of Queensland.

[Media release from Queensland Attorney-General Shannon Fentiman](#) announcing the parliamentary committee enquiry.