

**Premier of New South Wales
Dominic Perrottet**

19 November 2021

Dear Premier,

RE: A community solidarity statement with NSW Muslims

We, the undersigned individuals and organisations, record our disappointment that the NSW Liberal Party voted down the Anti-Discrimination (Religious Vilification) Bill on 12 November 2021, as put forward by the Labor Party and supported by the Greens.

The atrocity of the Christchurch terror attack continues to reverberate in the Australian Muslim community. From any perspective, the scale of the atrocity was unprecedented in Australian or New Zealand history in the loss of life and how those lives were taken. The terrorist was a young man from New South Wales.

An appropriate response would be to prevent such harm from happening again. Yet more than two years on, Muslims have no protection against discrimination or vilification in New South Wales.

Inciting hatred leads to real harm—a hate crime against a 38-week pregnant woman in hijab in Parramatta. And the many more stories that don't make the headlines.

Jews and Sikhs cannot lawfully be targeted by hate campaigns in NSW because they are protected under the 'ethno-religious' category of race. However, the Courts have found Muslims are not covered – despite it being the original intention of the law.

Muslims are one of the most targeted communities by white nationalists, and there is nothing they can do.

Please do not pretend the proper protections are there when they are clearly missing. In the parliamentary debate on this Bill, Members of the Government referred to section 93Z of the Crimes Act, which criminalises incitement to violence. That offence has never been used. It doesn't deal with hate campaigns that indirectly create violence. Plus, it's not a civil remedy and depends entirely on police bringing prosecutions. Muslims need the same remedy that other racial minorities have.

We know that half the value of these laws is the vital message they send about what our society will and won't tolerate.

Anti-Muslim hatred has been the fuel for white nationalism in Australia for more than a decade, putting many other communities at risk. The dangers of doing nothing affect us all.

There is no reason to delay the progress of the laws based on what happens at a federal level. The NSW statutory framework is entirely different and fundamentally deficient in protecting on the grounds of religious belief. The change would be straightforward and basic.

We call upon you to immediately introduce a Bill to extend the race-based protections against discrimination and vilification to cover the Muslim community.

We further call on you to deliver this legislation within this term of Government.

Please show the NSW community that you stand against hate and stand for equality, respect, and safety for all.

Please treat this matter with the urgency and significance it deserves.

Yours faithfully

ORGANISATIONS

All Together Now
Australian Muslim Advocacy Network
Australian Muslim Women's Centre for Human Rights
Islamic Council of Queensland
Islamic Council of Victoria
Islamic Society of Darra
Islamic Society of South Australia
Islamic Society of Toowoomba
Muslim Women Australia

INDIVIDUALS

Adam Demir
Adel Salman
Anas Yaghmour
Aziz Khan
Dhuha Jasim
Fadlullah Wilmot
Habib Mahomed Jamal
Kemal Omar
Mahmood Nathie
Mohamad Abdalla OAM
Moustafa Kheir
Mustafa Ally OAM
Rita Jabri Markwell
Sana Afiouni
Sara Saleh

Sara Cheikh Husain

Sayraz Mohammed

Taimoor Ali Babar Sehgal