



Australian  
Human Rights  
Commission

President  
Professor Gillian Triggs

Our ref: GDE:2017/101

28 April 2017

Ms Toni Matulick  
Committee Secretary  
Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee  
Parliament House  
PO Box 6100  
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Ms Matulick,

### **Racial Discrimination Amendment Bill 2016**

I refer to the above Bill which has been referred to the Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Legislation Committee for inquiry and report by 9 May 2017.

The Bill proposes to remove the words 'offend, insult,' from section 18C(1)(a) of the *Racial Discrimination Act 1975* (Cth).

The amendments proposed in this Bill have been considered recently by the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights as part of its inquiry into *Freedom of speech in Australia*. That Committee tabled a report of its findings on 28 February 2017.

The Commission made two submissions to that inquiry, on 9 December 2016,<sup>1</sup> and 15 February 2017.<sup>2</sup>

- 
- <sup>1</sup> Australian Human Rights Commission, *submission to the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights inquiry into Freedom of speech in Australia*, 9 December 2016. At <http://www.aph.gov.au/DocumentStore.ashx?id=d42f430a-869c-4706-9414-bf0cba934162&subId=461226> (viewed 28 April 2017).
  - <sup>2</sup> Australian Human Rights Commission, *supplementary submission to the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights inquiry into Freedom of speech in Australia*, 15 February 2017. At <http://www.aph.gov.au/DocumentStore.ashx?id=1a996271-e850-48c7-89e4-53219b38eaf5&subId=461226> (viewed 28 April 2017).

The Commission also attended public hearings in Canberra on 12 December 2016<sup>3</sup> and 17 February 2017<sup>4</sup> and gave further evidence in person.

The Commission commends its previous submissions to you in relation to your consideration of this Bill.

Yours sincerely,

Gillian Triggs  
**President**

- 
- <sup>3</sup> Australian Human Rights Commission, evidence to the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights, Canberra, 12 December 2016, pp 1-22. At <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;db=COMMITTEES;id=committees%2Fcommjnt%2F8cee83ef-31be-4aad-9696-55de0c602a09%2F0001;query=Id%3A%22committees%2Fcommjnt%2F8cee83ef-31be-4aad-9696-55de0c602a09%2F0000%22> (viewed 28 April 2017).
- <sup>4</sup> Australian Human Rights Commission, evidence to the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights, Canberra, 17 February 2017, pp 44-76. At <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;db=COMMITTEES;id=committees%2Fcommjnt%2Ffc7f687c-3c9d-4c03-93a9-2bcfcef6023c%2F0006;query=Id%3A%22committees%2Fcommjnt%2Ffc7f687c-3c9d-4c03-93a9-2bcfcef6023c%2F0000%22> (viewed 28 April 2017).