

## **Submission Opposing the Bill: Antisemitism at Australian Universities**

### **To Whom It May Concern,**

I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed bill addressing antisemitism at Australian universities. My opposition is based on concerns related to resource allocation, equity, and the broader implications for Australian governance and societal cohesion. My intention is to approach this matter from the standpoint of Australia's interests, focusing on principles of fairness and inclusivity.

The Attorney-General, Mark Dreyfus, is quoted as stating:

"All around Australia Jewish students and staff tell me they don't feel welcome on campus and they don't think their universities care."

"This is an intolerable situation and urgent action is needed to address the tensions on university campuses to protect the safety of students and staff. The Albanese Government is committed to ensuring we deal effectively with this disturbing situation."

While any form of discrimination or hostility towards individuals based on their identity is unacceptable, I believe the measures proposed by this bill may be misplaced and unnecessary for the following reasons:

### **1. Existing Frameworks Already Address Antisemitism and Other Forms of Discrimination**

Australia already has initiatives and legal protections to combat racism, antisemitism, and Islamophobia. The existence of these frameworks, as referenced on the Attorney-General's website, suggests that adequate mechanisms are in place to address concerns raised by any group, including Jewish communities. Redirecting taxpayer money towards a specific focus group risks duplicating efforts and undermines the equity of these broader frameworks.

### **2. Context of the Israel-Palestine Conflict**

The ongoing Israel-Palestine conflict has understandably sparked strong opinions and debates within society. This situation naturally extends to university campuses, where critical discussions about international relations, human rights, and foreign policy often take place. However, rather than fostering open dialogue, prioritizing a single community's experiences over others risks creating a perception of bias.

It is worth noting that, at the time of writing, allegations of war crimes have been reported in relation to the Israel-Palestine conflict, with leaders such as Benjamin Netanyahu and former defense minister Yoav Gallant facing International Criminal Court arrest warrants. Australia, as a party to international agreements, is obligated to consider such developments carefully. While it is vital to avoid generalizing about any group based on the actions of individuals, the disproportionate emphasis on supporting

Jewish communities may inadvertently signal a lack of impartiality in Australia's approach to this complex issue.

### **3. Perception of Bias and Resource Allocation**

Australia's official position is a commitment to a two-state solution, yet the government's policies often appear to lean heavily towards Israel. This perception of bias may arise, in part, from the significant representation of individuals with ties to the Jewish community in Australian leadership. While this is not inherently problematic, it is essential to ensure that public policies are perceived as fair, neutral, and representative of all Australians.

Focusing on a bill that exclusively addresses antisemitism, rather than addressing all forms of discrimination equitably, risks alienating other communities and could undermine Australia's reputation for fairness and inclusivity.

### **4. Misuse of Public Funds and Parliamentary Resources**

Spending taxpayer money and parliamentary time on this bill is difficult to justify. Australians expect their government to prioritize issues that impact the nation as a whole, particularly during times of economic and social challenges. The proposed bill, while well-intentioned, could be perceived as an unnecessary diversion of resources away from more pressing national concerns.

### **Conclusion**

I believe it is essential to ensure that all communities in Australia feel safe and welcome, but this must be achieved through comprehensive and inclusive measures. Singling out specific groups for additional protections, when frameworks already exist to address discrimination, risks undermining national unity and public trust.

I respectfully urge the committee to reconsider the necessity of this bill and instead focus on strengthening existing anti-discrimination efforts to ensure they are applied equitably across all communities.

Sincerely,  
Citizen of, Queensland, Australia