



# PARLIAMENT of AUSTRALIA

## MEDIA RELEASE

### HUMAN RIGHTS SUB-COMMITTEE

#### JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS, DEFENCE AND TRADE

Inquiry into the status of religion or belief

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### Committee examines freedom of religion

Do Australians have the right to practice their beliefs? Can they freely speak of these beliefs and organise and associate with others who share the same faith? Does freedom of religion and belief need greater protection under the law? Or, are some beliefs and practices not acceptable in Australian society today?

These are some of the questions being examined by the current inquiry into the status of the human right to freedom of religion or belief which will hold hearing at Parliament House Canberra on Friday 22 June.

Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade [Human Rights Sub-Committee](#) Chair, [Mr Kevin Andrews MP](#), says the hearing will focus on the protection of the right to freedom or belief in Australia.

“Many submissions to this inquiry have expressed concern that freedom of religion or belief is being challenged by the emphasis placed on other human rights,” Mr Andrews said.

“What form any additional protections might take, and how to balance religious freedom with other human rights, are matters being considered by the Sub-Committee.”

The Sub-Committee will hear evidence from human rights groups, activists, religious and community organisations.

The programs for the hearing can be found on the inquiry [website](#).

#### Public hearing details:

**Date:** Friday 22 June 2018

**Time:** 8:30am to 4:00pm

#### Location:

**Committee Room 1R1**

**Parliament House Canberra**

#### Media enquiries:

Mr Kevin Andrews MP (Menzies, Victoria), Chair of the Human Rights Sub-Committee of the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade

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Interested members of the public may wish to track the committee via the [website](#). Click on the blue 'Track Committee' button in the bottom right hand corner and use the forms to login to My Parliament or to register for a My Parliament account.

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