



Hindu Council of Australia

PRESS RELEASE

Religious Discrimination Bill

Date : 12th February, 2022

Hindu Council supports a Religious Bill that helps preserve Hinduness of our temples, schools, religious institutions and saves them from unnecessary interference from activists. We support the right to express our faith and the outlawing of religious discrimination.

The bill passed by the Parliament gives Hindus these protections, but additional provisions of the bill adversely affect employment of Hindus. Employment preference based on faith can be misused to aid Religious conversion of Hindus by coercion. Hindu Council of Australia lobbied with the Federal Government and the opposition to address these concerns.

Hindu Council thanks the leader of opposition Mr Anthony Albanese for acknowledging our concerns. The shadow attorney General promised to introduce an amendment to protect Hindu employees in aged care. It did not go far enough as it still left other Hindu workers in hospitals, charities etc. vulnerable. However it was the first step in the right direction to mitigate our concerns. An amendment to protect Hindus from religious vilification by other faiths was also introduced.

Unfortunately, the amendments failed due to lack of support from all but five government MPs who crossed the floor to vote in favour of amendments. The Bill is now before the senate.

We urge both parties to work with Hindu Council of Australia to strengthen protection of religious institutions minus employment exemptions to charities and businesses. We also urge protection from religious discrimination and from religious vilification.

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