

Media Release

The Hon Daniel Andrews MP
Premier



Friday, 28 October 2022

MAKING OUR LAWS STRONGER FOR MULTICULTURAL AND MULTIFAITH COMMUNITIES

A re-elected Andrews Labor Government will establish a new Multicultural and Multifaith Law Reform Consultative Committee to ensure the voices of diverse communities are heard and considered in the development of Victorian laws.

The Committee will be made up of legal experts, community and faith leaders and will look at legislation through a cultural and religious lens.

The Committee will provide advice on how laws can be shaped with the needs of multicultural and multifaith communities in mind.

Its focus will be on ensuring laws give all multicultural and faith communities the ability to contribute to our state, free from discrimination and racism.

An expression of interest process will open to all members of the Victorian community wishing to participate in the committee.

Furthermore, a re-elected Labor Government will strengthen the *Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001* to make it easier to prosecute any individual who incites hatred or bigotry based on someone's faith or skin colour.

In recent years we have seen the rise of neo-Nazi right wing extremism in Victoria, which has led to the rise of Islamophobia, anti-Semitism, and racism in the state.

Strengthening these laws will allow for greater protection of multicultural and faith communities in Victoria. It will ensure more prosecutions against those who incite hatred or racism against a person or group based on their cultural background or religious belief is prosecuted.

Only Labor has a record of delivering on the things that matter to Victoria's multicultural and multifaith communities.

Quotes attributable to Premier Daniel Andrews

"We've sat down and listened to communities about their concerns and we're making this commitment because we have heard their voices."

"Discrimination and hatred of any kind is unacceptable – and today's announcement helps strengthen the work we can do to make sure no Victorian ever has to face this kind of vile and disgusting behaviour."

Quotes attributable to Attorney-General Jaclyn Symes

"Recent events have shown the Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001 does not do enough to protect Victorians from multicultural and multifaith backgrounds. We're going to fix this and reduce racism and discrimination in our state."

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Quotes attributable to Minister for Multicultural Affairs Ros Spence

“Our Government has always valued the role multicultural and multifaith communities have played in shaping the Victoria we know today – we could not imagine our state without their enormous contribution and for that we will always be grateful.”