

Our Religious Freedom

Bring in full, permanent and adequate protection of religious freedoms

In the light of the Australian tradition of fair go and tolerance and affirming the diversity and equality of Australian society, we call upon the Australian government to provide full, permanent and adequate protections for all seven aspects of freedom of religion.

Australia used to be the land of the fair go. Humble and colloquial, the fair go is our true identity for equality and justice. Freedom of religion and other historic freedoms such as freedom of speech, freedom of the press and academic freedom are increasingly under threat in Australia. For example, recently we have seen:

- **In 2017**, a pastor was asked to appear before Tasmania's Anti-Discrimination Commission after posting a Christian perspective on LGBT relationships in his online blogs.
- **In 2017**, 18-year-old Madeline was fired from her job over her views, posted via Facebook, on same-sex marriage.
- **In 2017** a student who answered a question about Christian views on gay sex, was suspended from university after a classmate complained.
- **In 2015** Queensland, a street preacher was arrested and charged with causing anxiety by preaching about sin.
- **In 2015**, Tasmania's Anti-Discrimination Commission accused the Catholic Church over humiliating LGBT Australians by distributing a booklet supporting traditional marriage.
- **Safe Schools Program** imposes beliefs about gender and sexual relationships in schools.

Australia, along with other English-speaking countries, led the world in establishing freedom of religion and spreading it around the world. When we became a Federation in 1901, seven important aspects of freedom of religion had already developed.

These are consistent with the UN's Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) to which Australia has signed up:

1. **Freedom of worship**
2. **Freedom to read Scriptures in public**
3. **Freedom to interpret the Scriptures without government interference**
4. **Freedom to choose or change your faith or belief**
5. **Freedom to preach and try to convince others of the truth of your beliefs**
6. **Freedom to build churches, synagogues, mosques etc.**
7. **Freedom from being required to affirm a particular worldview or set of beliefs in order to attend university, hold a public sector job or stand for election.**

These seven aspects of freedom of religion have become central to our national identity and values, but they need to have full, permanent and adequate protection, which should also include the freedom to give parental care to a child without being required to affirm a particular worldview or set of beliefs.

We urge you to sign our petition to protect religious freedom here or online at OurReligiousFreedom.org.au

OurReligiousFreedom.org.au

Barnabas Fund, PO BOX 3527, LOGANHOLME, QLD 4129
Telephone (07) 3806 1076 or 1300 365 799
Email: bfaustralia@barnabasfund.org

Barnabas Fund Australia Limited is a Charitable Institution but gifts are not Tax Deductible
ABN 70 005 572 485


barnabasfund
hope and aid for the persecuted church

