

To the Committee Secretary
Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee

I am writing regarding my concerns with the proposed Human Rights and Anti-Discrimination Bill 2012.

The implications arising from this bill seem to infringe on freedom of speech, freedom of religion and other values which are highly prized and were long fought for in the free world. For a legal matter to arise from someone simply feeling offended on political or religious grounds hardly seems to be fair, as offense can be very subjective. Surely people are entitled to their opinions and to dialogue these matters on a personal level without fear of reprisals. After all there are many matters which people can become offended over yet we do not distinguish them and make them illegal.

Also, I am concerned over the ramifications for religious organisations that would not be able to operate within their values under the bill. Surely it is not discriminatory for a religious organisation to operate within their values (in matters that do not conflict with existing law) when those who do not wish to abide by their values can freely find alternative services elsewhere.

Are we becoming so bound up in political correctness that we can no longer get along like mature people and sort out our differences of opinion without resorting to such measures? Will these changes not create more problems? Problems such as more offense, more cost, more time and expense. It seems that only lawyers would benefit.

I would ask that you consider these things long and hard and consider that such measures will hinder not help our society and should be rejected or amended.

Thank you for your time.