AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATION OF CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

MEDIA RELEASE

AACS calls for broad consultation on Government's hate crimes bill

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The Australian Association of Christian Schools (AACS) welcomes the Government's commitment to addressing antisemitism in the wake of the Bondi attack, while urging the Government to properly consult faith communities on its *Combatting Antisemitism, Hate and Extremism Bill 2026* to be introduced to Parliament next week.

The Bill, released today, provides the Home Affairs Minister with new powers to list organisations as 'prohibited hate groups' and create new offences for inciting hatred.

AACS CEO Vanessa Cheng raised concerns about the speed at which the legislation is progressing.

"We support strong action to combat antisemitism," Ms Cheng said. "At the same time, it is important that faith communities are given the opportunity to engage meaningfully with legislation of this significance, particularly as it is progressing prior to the work of the Royal Commission."

Ms Cheng noted that faith communities continue to seek clarity and reassurance around protections for religious freedom.

"While the Government is acting to address hate crimes, there remains ongoing concern about the absence of comprehensive religious discrimination protections," she said. "It is important that new measures operate alongside clear and balanced safeguards for freedom of religion, association and expression."

AACS is calling on the Government to allow sufficient time for consultation with religious communities before the legislation proceeds.

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The Australian Association of Christian Schools (AACS) is the longest running peak body for Christian Schools with member schools located in every state and territory. Representing 100 schools and more than 45,000 students, AACS member schools are united by their desire to deliver a biblically authentic approach to education in all areas of learning and life.