

National Human Rights Consultation Submission

AGWW-7QTQ62

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Submission Text:

I request that the bill of rights explicitly recognise the rights of people to practice religion, including the following:

1. Allowing of religious practice not in conflict with criminal law or constitutional law
2. Allowing the right to proselytize members of any faith or no faith
3. Allowing the right to change religion, even if the religion they have joined has rules forbidding leaving that religion
4. Having the right to critique, analyze and complain about any religion

I consider these points to be an important issue. Religions serve humankind not the other way around. Therefore religions should not have 'rights' over and above humans. An example which I hope will be specifically DISCLAIMED in the bill of rights is the concept of a 'defaming religion' crime. Like all things that people hold dear (e.g. national identity, ethnicity, culture, reputation, political ideology, economic theory, etc) people will be offended when it is rightly or even wrongly criticized, but we should not criminalize 'hurting peoples feelings' even if it provokes criminal acts by the offended. Being offended is not a free ticket to commit crimes and the person whose speech is used as an excuse for violence or other criminal activity is NOT the cause of the crime.

The free speech provisions should specify a presupposition of innocence of any speech crime such as libel, market manipulation or inciting violence.

Free speech provisions should specify that when 'hate crime' legislation is used to persecute another, and the charges are found to be groundless, the one who used it as a bullying tool should be liable to being charged with a hate crime also.

We don't need freedom of speech except when we want to exercise speech against (i.e. in opposition to) a powerful entity, therefore the free speech provisions should explicitly list (but not be limited to) the entities against which we may speak without fear:

- * Against government
- * Against businesses
- * Against religions
- * Against political parties/systems
- * Against any status quo or majority opinion

Thanks for reading this far

Cheers

Dale