



AUSTRALIAN
LAWYERS
FOR
HUMAN RIGHTS

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Minister Gordon Ramsay
ACT Attorney General
GPO Box 1020
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Dear Attorney

RE: CHANGES TO ANTI DISCRIMINATION LEGISLATION

Australian Lawyers for Human Rights (ALHR) congratulates you and your government on its decision to expand discrimination law to now include extra grounds on which discrimination is prohibited including accommodation status, employment status, status as a victim of family or domestic violence, immigration status and physical features.

This is a progressive amendment that tackles community concerns about homeless people entering shops, domestic violence survivors losing jobs/homes when partners have harassed them at work, and people leaving the Alexander Maconochie Centre finding it difficult to get jobs.

ALHR recognizes that this builds on changes that prohibited vilification on the basis of religious beliefs or disability that came into force in August last year.

ALHR thanks you for taking an important stand for human rights, one which is the first in Australia of its kind. We hope the other governments in Australia review these amendments and make similar amendments to strengthen their discrimination legislation and provide better protections for vulnerable and disadvantaged Australians.

ALHR commends this action as a positive step towards meeting obligations under the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*, the *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights* and the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women*.

We would very much welcome the chance to meet in person should you wish to discuss future amendments or policy initiatives to protect the human rights of those living in the ACT.

Yours faithfully,

Sangeeta Sharmin
ALHR ACT Convenor

Australian Lawyers for Human Rights (ALHR) was established in 1993 and is a national association of Australian solicitors, barristers, academics, judicial officers and law students who practise and promote international human rights law in Australia. ALHR has active and engaged National, State and Territory committees and a secretariat at La Trobe University Law School in Melbourne. Through advocacy, media engagement, education, networking, research and training, ALHR promotes, practices and protects universally accepted standards of human rights throughout Australia and overseas.