

FECCA makes submission to the Inquiry into the Status of the Human Right to Freedom of Religion or Belief

FECCA has made a submission to the Federal Parliamentary Inquiry into the Status of the Human Right to Freedom of Religion or Belief urging Parliament to resist any legislation designed to curb the freedom of religious practice and belief.

Joe Caputo, Chairperson of FECCA said: 'Australian Governments have an obligation to ensure religious freedom.'

'It is critical to respect religious freedoms in Australia and to resist any attempts to restrict or prohibit the wearing of religious attire and the availability of food with religious and cultural significance,' he continued.

'These freedoms form the basis of Australia's tolerant, harmonious and respectful multicultural society,' said Mr Caputo.

In its submission, FECCA called on the Government to encourage inter-faith dialogue to promote understanding between Australians of all beliefs and repeated its commitment to the establishment of Federal legislation to protect religious freedoms.

FECCA also highlighted examples of good practice in Australia.

'The Australian Defence Force has set an admirable example by prioritising cultural awareness and maintaining open, inclusive and non-discriminatory policies,' said Mr Caputo.

FECCA expressed its deep concern about the persecution of cultural and religious groups overseas and acknowledged the Government's policy to increase the humanitarian intake.

Mr Caputo emphasised: 'Priority must be given to refugees based on need alone, irrespective of their religious, cultural or linguistic background.'

FECCA is the national peak body representing Australians from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. FECCA's role is to advocate and promote issues on behalf of its constituency to government, business and the broader community.

Media contact: (0424) 910617 / emma@fecca.org.au