

Australian Citizenship Amendment (Allegiance to Australia) Bill passes Parliament

The Commonwealth Parliament has passed the *Australian Citizenship Amendment (Allegiance to Australia) Bill*. This legislation amends the *Australian Citizenship Act* to broaden the powers relating to the cessation of Australian citizenship for those persons engaging in terrorism and who are a serious threat to Australia and Australia's interests.

FECCA made a submission to the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security when it examined the Bill, and also appeared before a public hearing of the Committee. The Committee made a number of recommendations which were adopted by the Government and incorporated into the Bill. FECCA was encouraged by many of these recommendations, particularly those relating to children and addressing procedural concerns raised in the conduct of the inquiry.

FECCA continues to hold concerns about the 'self-executing' nature of this legislation and its retrospective operation.

"We are concerned about the effect that this legislation could have on social cohesion, and the possibility that it may create two classes of Australian citizens" said FECCA Chairperson Joe Caputo.

FECCA stresses the importance of respect, tolerance and social inclusion to build an accepting, cohesive and unified Australia.

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