

# FECCA welcomes swift action to disendorse racist candidate

The Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia (FECCA) welcomes swift action taken today by the Liberal Party to disendorse their candidate for Lyons Jessica Whelan, after it was revealed she made anti-Muslim comments on social media.

In the posts, Ms Whelan said "You shouldn't even be in Australia if you believe in ALLAH!" and "Don't bloody send them to Tasmania. We don't want them", as well as calling for a referendum on whether or not to close Australia's borders to Muslims.

Her disendorsement comes after another Liberal candidate, Jeremy Hearn, was also sacked for making anti-Muslim comments.

FECCA Chairperson Ms Mary Patetsos said racist speech had no place in the Australian parliament.

"We have seen more and more racist speech creeping into our public discourse in recent times," she said.

"When racist speech comes from our political and civic leaders, there is real danger it can proliferate those sentiments within our society.

"This type of speech divides us and makes Australia a less safe place for our migrant communities.

"FECCA welcomes the swift action to disendorse these candidates and reminds all candidates to be respectful of multicultural communities during the federal election campaign.

"In the wake of the Christchurch tragedy, this is one way we can ensure our political system helps make Australia a safer place, rather than a more divisive place for its citizens."

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

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