

Federation joins 90 community groups to oppose One Nation bill

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The New South Wales Teachers Federation has joined with a large number of community groups to oppose legislation on 'religious freedoms' put before State Parliament by One Nation.

The Anti-Discrimination Amendment (Religious Freedoms and Equality) Bill 2020 has the potential, if passed, to place the right to religious beliefs and the right to live according to religious beliefs above the other rights we all enjoy as citizens of this state.

Federation President Angelo Gavrielatos said the union opposes this legislation because it aims to override existing protections against discrimination.

"Our Anti-Discrimination laws were a major step forward to achieve equality for all, including minority groups in the community," Mr Gavrielatos said.

"These were hard fought gains which outlawed discrimination against people of different races, people with disability, older people, LGBTIQ people, among others."

"Throughout our history, the Teachers Federation has prided itself on standing shoulder to shoulder with minority groups to achieve for equality for all. In this instance we have joined over 90 other organisations representing people of faith, people with disability, women, youth and others, in opposing this Bill in its current form."

Mr Gavrielatos said Federation's major concern with this Bill is that, if passed, it would prioritise religious views that may breach laws and harm others. Such behaviour could be harmful to students at school, with this bill placing the rights of individuals to voice their beliefs over the rights of other students to have access to a safe, non-judgemental and secular education.

"The One Nation bill allows religion to be used as an excuse to hurt, exclude and demean others, including other people of faith," he said.

Additionally, the bill makes it harder for employers to create and maintain inclusive workplace cultures as well as protect their employees from harmful conduct as a result of one person's beliefs.

"The One Nation NSW Religion Bill seeks to divide our communities by creating a double standard in our laws and allowing harmful behaviour to take place," Mr Gavrielatos concluded.



Federation maintains that laws should protect all of us and aim to achieve equality for all – this will not be the case if the One Nation bill is passed by the NSW Parliament.