

**Submission by the Australian Centre for Christianity and Culture to the Parliament of
Victoria's Legal and Social Issues Committee inquiry into anti-vilification protections**

Introduction

The Australian Centre for Christianity and Culture is a partnership between Charles Sturt University and the Anglican Diocese of Canberra and Goulburn. The ACC&C is an ecumenical body which exists for the well-being of the spiritual life of the nation and to foster a wisdom for the common good in civil society.

Contact: Rt.Rev Prof Stephen Pickard, Director. [REDACTED]
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General comment

The ACC&C thanks the Committee for inviting it to make a submission to the inquiry into current anti-vilification protections.

Terms of Reference

8) The ACC&C supports the extension of protections beyond existing classes to include women, children, members of the LGBTQI community, and people with a disability.

1) and 2). The ACC&C notes that, according to the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission, there has been only one successful criminal prosecution of serious vilification in the *Racial and Religious Tolerance Act's* 17 years of operation. In view of this, we would urge the Committee to ensure that the Act's enforcement provisions are fully consistent with the intent of the Act.

5) and 6). Given the prevalence and steady proliferation particularly of gendered hate speech and bullying on social media, a focus on the role of state legislation in addressing online vilification and on the effectiveness of current approaches to law enforcement in relation to online offending is clearly appropriate.