

---

21 March 2017

## IPA WELCOMES SUBSTANTIAL CHANGES TO 18C

"The IPA welcomes the Turnbull Government's commitment to make substantial legislative changes to section 18C of the Racial Discrimination Act," according to John Roskam, Executive Director of the Institute of Public Affairs.

As reported last night, the Turnbull Government is proposing to replace the words "offend" and "insult" in section 18C with the word "harass".

"This is an important step towards restoring freedom of speech in Australia. However, only the full repeal of 18C will guarantee this fundamental human right."

"Section 18C in any form is a restriction on freedom of speech that chills public debate and damages social cohesion."

"The definition of words like 'harass' are mired in uncertainty. We would predict that even under the Government's proposal, problems would still emerge in the future."

"Laws which restrict freedom of speech have no place in a liberal democracy such as Australia. The IPA will continue to advocate for the repeal of all laws which restrict freedom of speech," said Mr Roskam.

**For media and comment: John Roskam, Executive Director, Institute of Public Affairs, on 0415 475 673, or at [jroskam@ipa.org.au](mailto:jroskam@ipa.org.au)**

**For media coordination: Evan Mulholland, Media and Communications Manager, on 0405 140 780, or at [emulholland@ipa.org.au](mailto:emulholland@ipa.org.au)**