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30 March 2017

## Coalition must take commitment to freedom of speech to the next election

"The Coalition government must take its commitment to reform section 18C to the next election," said Simon Breheny, director of policy at the free market think tank the Institute of Public Affairs.

The Coalition government's *Human Rights Legislation Amendment Bill 2017* today failed to pass the senate in full, with Australian Labor Party, Australian Greens, Nick Xenophon Team and Jacquie Lambie voting together to defeat the substantive changes to the bill. The bill proposes to amend section 18C of the *Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth)* by removing the words 'offend, insult, and humiliate', inserting the word 'harass'. It would still be unlawful to 'harass or intimidate' a person on the basis of 'race, colour, or national or ethnic origin.'

"If another Andrew Bolt, QUT, Bill Leak or Ashfield Uniting Church type case occurs that will be on the heads of Labor, Greens, Xenophon and Jacquie Lambie who voted today against removing restrictions on freedom of speech."

"Senators who voted against this bill have failed a test of their commitment to basic human liberty," said Mr Breheny.

The IPA submission to the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights can be read [here](#).

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