



Date: 8<sup>th</sup> August 2023

NSW Law Reform Commission

Dear Members of the NSW Law Reform Commission,

**Re: Urgent Consideration Requested for the Review of the NSW Anti-Discrimination Act**

I write on behalf of those who find themselves unjustly impacted by the current operation of the NSW Anti-Discrimination Act. It has become evident that particular sectors of our community are experiencing undue hardship due to discriminatory practices that this legislation unfortunately permits. This position paper formally requests a comprehensive reconsideration of the Act to guarantee the equitable treatment of all members of our society.

Our gravest concerns stem from recurring prejudice experienced by individuals who have successfully battled depression, including firearm license holders and individuals from disparate industries. Despite their recovery, they continue to be categorised as ongoing liabilities, which leads to considerable financial drain as they strive for absolution.

Furthermore, an alarming number of NSW citizens, to the tune of 860,000, face discrimination at the hands of financial institutions, insurance providers, and related entities on account of their social policies. These institutions, regrettably, hold biases against certain lifestyle choices, recreational pursuits, personal beliefs, and medical procedure preferences, thus imposing substantial hardships on unfairly targeted individuals and businesses.

[Banking-code-submission-SIFA.pdf](#)

Financial industry code of practice: <https://www.afia.asn.au/s/BNPL-Code-FINAL-PDF-12723.pdf>

Australian and US academic research consistently illustrates the positive impacts of shooting sports on mental health. Below are examples which demonstrate that hunting and outdoor activity results in significant reduction in anxiety and depression levels among participants. Similarly, findings from the University of Queensland underscore the role of recreational hunting and shooting as stress-relief activities, enhancing a sense of control, accomplishment, and self-esteem among individuals. It is a travesty that those who can benefit from such therapeutic advantages are curtailed by existing discriminatory practices.

[Tracie Abram, Michigan State University Extension - November 18, 2020-Health benefits of hunting - Stress Less with Mindfulness \(msu.edu\)](#)



Moreover, these prejudiced practices bear significant economic implications. The mining industry and firearm license holders account for a substantial number of NSW citizens. Their combined contribution extends to an estimated 1,029,242 individuals, taking into account average family sizes. Furthermore, hunting, a principal component of the firearms sector, brings in more than 1.2 billion annually to NSW's economy, exceeding some of our state's largest agricultural industries.

[Hunting shown to contribute more to the economy than the wool industry in NSW - ABC News](#)

Our proposition calls for a substantial revision of the Anti-Discrimination Act. It is imperative to incorporate explicit, enforceable protections for individuals recovering from mental health issues and those facing discrimination from financial and related institutions due to their lifestyle choices or beliefs. These revised protections should effectively prohibit any discrimination on the basis of past mental health conditions and personal preferences.

Furthermore, we strongly urge the commission to establish rigorous monitoring and compliance mechanisms to enforce the revised Act effectively. This includes creating secure and confidential channels for the reporting of discrimination instances. The voices of the affected parties must be included in this review process. Their lived experiences provide invaluable insights that should be at the heart of the review and drafting of a more inclusive and fair Act.

We are pleased to inform that our proposed changes have received significant backing from several NSW political parties. This support underscores the urgency and importance of the issues at hand.

In conclusion, it is our sincere hope that the NSW Law Reform Commission will give these concerns due consideration during the review of the Anti-Discrimination Act. A revised Act that is robust and just will foster a more inclusive and fair society, protecting the rights of all individuals and businesses in NSW.

Thank you for your attention to this critical matter. We stand ready to participate in further discussions and assist in any way possible to facilitate these necessary changes.

Yours faithfully,

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Shooters Union New South Wales Pty Ltd