



# **The Hon Ray Williams MP**

**Member for Castle Hill**

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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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23 February 2023

### **GREATER SAFETY AND SECURITY FOR FAITH COMMUNITIES IN CASTLE HILL**

A re-elected NSW Liberal and Nationals Government will mean greater safety and security for faith-based groups and organisations in Castle Hill.

In its next term, a NSW Liberal and Nationals Government will create a \$10 million grants program to support religious organisations strengthen safety and security at institutions where there is a demonstrated risk, including places of worship, schools, community centres, and buildings with religious symbols.

Member for Castle Hill Ray Williams MP said that there is a rich tapestry of faiths living across Castle Hill.

“Each and every one of these community members deserves to be able to practice their faith safely and freely,” Mr Williams said.

“Through this commitment we will be able to empower religious groups to take the actions necessary to keep them and their community members safe in Castle Hill.”

The \$10 million program will provide capital and operational funding for a range of safety measures to strengthen preparedness and response to safety risks, including security and detection software and systems, communal security services, lighting, fencing, CCTV, training staff, and well-being programs for community members. Importantly, support for guards and management of security at high-risk venues or particularly at-risk sites will also be eligible for funding, as assessed by NSW Police.

Mr Williams added that the NSW Liberal and Nationals Government have worked incredibly hard to build a safe and harmonious multicultural and multi-faith society.

“This \$10 million investment forms part of our vision to ensure this continues and everyone feels safe to follow their faith, go to school, or visit their places of worship,” Mr Williams said.

This commitment complements a range of measures implemented by the NSW Liberal and Nationals Government to improve community safety and social cohesion, including prohibiting the public display of Nazi symbols and creating a new offence of publicly threatening or inciting violence against people on several grounds, including race and religious affiliation.

**ENDS**

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