



Alliance of Hindu Organisations (AHO)

Helen Grant MP,
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Justice, Women and Equalities and Minister for
Victims and the Courts

7 May 2013

Dear Rt Hon Helen Grant MP,

Re: Consultation process for Caste Discrimination legislation

The Alliance of Hindu Organisations, which represents up to 1 million Hindus living in the UK, is disappointed that the House of Commons has voted to bring forward legislation that will have the effect of including caste within the protected characteristics of the Equality Act 2010.

The Alliance has serious concerns about the consequences and practicality of such legislation and about the impact it may have on communities living within the UK.

We would like to arrange a meeting with you urgently to discuss the following:

- The need for a full and proper process of consultation over a considered period of time. We would like to impress upon you the importance of not doing this in a rushed manner, and not taking time to adequately address our concerns.
- The Hindu community's proposed next steps for engaging with Government and this consultation process. In particular:
 - We have commissioned the Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies (OCHS) to produce an independent and robust report looking at the challenges in implementing this legislation.
 - We have started a grassroots campaign to raise awareness of the caste discrimination debate and to inform Hindus of the challenges identified in our campaign over the last few weeks.



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- In particular, our grassroots campaign is starting with a gathering of Hindus at the temple in North London of an Alliance member, BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha UK, on Wednesday 8 May 2013; and a gathering of temples from around the country organised by the another Alliance member, the National Council of Hindu Temples UK on Sunday 9 June 2013 to be held in Leicester.
- Our concern that any future research process should include appointed academics from a range of viewpoints and not only from those associated with the pro-legislation lobby.

We have already informed you of the following concerns that we have over the proposed legislation, which we reiterate here:

- Detailed and thorough consultation on the definition of Caste.
- Assurance from the Government that the legislation will not lead to caste profiling.
- Consider replacing the word "caste" with the word "descent"
- Sunset provisions
- Implementation in 1 to 2 years and only after due consideration of the above.

We look forward to hearing from you soon,

Sanjay Jagatia

On behalf of,

Alliance of Hindu Organisations (AHO)

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Telephone: 07969 756164

Alliance of Hindu Organisations Website: www.mycasteishindu.org



Alliance of Hindu Organisations (AHO)

The Alliance of Hindu Organisations UK (AHO) has been formed in response to the threat posed by this proposed amendment to the Equality Act 2010. The Alliance includes the following organisations that represent the vast majority of the 816,633 Hindus in the UK (2011 census figures):

National Council of Hindu Temples UK (NCHTUK)

Contact: Satish Sharma, General Secretary (Acting)

Email: secretary@nchtuk.org

www.nchtuk.org

Hindu Council UK (HCUK)

Contact: Sanjay Jagatia, Director/Secretary General

Email: generalsecretary@hinducounciluk.org

www.hinducounciluk.org

Hindu Forum of Britain (HFB)

Contact: Swaminathan V Vaidyanathan, Secretary General (Acting)

Email: sg@hfb.org.uk

www.hfb.org.uk

BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha UK

Contact: Nitin Palan, National Interfaith Coordinator for BAPS

Email: NPALAN@aol.com

<http://www.mandir.org>

International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON)

Contact: Gauri dasji

Email: gauridas108@gmail.com

www.bhaktivedantamanor.co.uk/home

Chinmaya Mission UK

Contact: Ramesh Pattni, Trustee

Email: rameshpattni@hotmail.com

www.chinmayauk.org/home.htm



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City Hindus Network (CHN)

Contact: Pratik Dattani, Chairman

Email: chnpratik@gmail.com

www.cityhindusnetwork.org.uk

National Hindu Students Forum (NHSF)

Contact: Chirag Patel, Public Relations Officer

Email: chirag.patel@nhsf.org.uk

www.nhsf.org.uk

Hindu Lawyers Association

Contact: Kishan Bhatt

Email: kishan1bhatt@gmail.com

<https://en-gb.facebook.com/HinduLawyersAssociation/info>

Nepalese Hindu Forum UK

Contact: Surya Prasad Upadhya

Email: sp_upadhya@btinternet.com

<http://uknhf.org.uk>

Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies (OCHS)

Contact: Shaunaka Rishi Das, Director

Email: shaunaka@ochs.org.com, shaunaka@ochs.org.uk

www.ochs.org.uk

Vishwa Hindu Kendra, Southall UK

Contact: Sudarshan Bhatia, President

Email: darshib@yahoo.co.uk

www.southallmandir.co.uk/home