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Media Release

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Sheed welcomes Nazi symbol ban

Independent Member for Shepparton District Suzanna Sheed welcomed the Victorian Government's ban on the Nazi symbol as the bill was debated in parliament this week.

Ms Sheed showed her support for the *Summary Offences Amendment (Nazi Symbol prohibition) Bill 2022* and outlined the impact of Nazism on her constituents in the Shepparton electorate and on the Victorian Jewish community.

The bill prohibits the display of the Nazi symbol in public areas and large fines will apply for those responsible of this offence.

"We have many communities in Australia who have fled persecution to find a place to feel safe, to live with their families and not have a symbol such as (the Hakenkreuz) ...put before them to create that fear," Ms Sheed said.

"It is a step towards saying that we will not tolerate certain behaviours in our community.

"We will not tolerate the hate speech and the hate symbols that people might choose to put before us and them thinking that that is their right.

"I think by...presenting this bill, by debating this bill, and by passing this important piece of legislation, we are all coming together to say, 'No, we won't have this'."

Ms Sheed spoke of the history of Judaism in the Shepparton District and some influential Jewish people such as chair of Visy Industries and president of Carlton Football Club Richard J Pratt.

"His philanthropy to Shepparton has always been greatly valued because of his years of association with Shepparton, and that generosity is reflected in our hospital and other facilities," Ms Sheed said.

"None of us have been immune from coming to understand what happened during that period of the great terror in Germany under the reign of Hitler.

“For me, in my early years, it was from reading *The Diary of Anne Frank*, the documentaries, the films.

“The horror portrayed of the things that happened to individuals, families, and communities during that time is so hard to comprehend, but we have to comprehend it and we have to be reminded of it.

“And when I see people in our community displaying symbols such as they do, that remind us so clearly that of that hatred, of that capacity for human beings to behave in ways that are so inhumane, that are so cruel and that are really so wicked, then I feel proud to be part of a parliament where everyone has come together, everyone is on the same page in relation to this piece of legislation.”

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