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## **Media Release** **The Federation of Indian Communities of Queensland Inc.** **(FICQ)**

Monday 18 September 2017

### **MLA Lamb ad creates controversy and rage in the community in Australia and India**

The Federation of Indian Communities of Queensland Inc. (FICQ) along with other communities across Australia expresses our concern over the ad by the Lamb Industry body.

On Monday 4 Sept 2017 Meat and Livestock Australia (MLA) released an ad to promote Lamb consumption in Australia. The Indian and Australian community expressed disappointment over the abuse of religious figures and artefacts. An appalling example is the use of a Lord Ganesha character with disrespectful dialogue as well as all the references to other religious figures.

This has created controversy especially among Hindu, Buddhist, Christian, Muslim and other faith based Australian communities. Many thousands of people and community groups have all expressed their anger and disappointment over this advertisement and the Indian and Australian communities have asked M.L.A. to withdraw the ad and apologise to the community.

Despite the community petitions and requests, M.L.A. has continuously refused to withdraw their ad. Instead they continue to justify their intention in support of multiculturalism and have indicated the ad will continue in its current form. Their explanation and justification has only increased anger and frustration in the community.

The M.L.A. claim they were not intending to offend Hindu or other faith communities. In reality, there is very clear evidence that the feeling of communities are being rejected and ignored by their decision to run the ad in the current form. M.L.A. must urgently reconsider their stand and withdraw it as a matter of respect to multicultural and multi-faith communities in Australian before they further damage and create divisions.

As a Queensland community let us join together to raise our voices to oppose this insensitive and offensive and cheap publicity stunt. We urge relevant authorities in M.L.A. to remove this ad permanently and publish an appropriate apology.

Let us hope common sense prevails and due respect is given to our multicultural and multi-faith communities in Queensland and Australia.

**Mr Palani Thevar, President, FICQ**