

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **Israel Folau launches GoFundMe campaign to help cover legal costs**

**MELBOURNE, Friday, June 21:** Israel Folau has today launched a GoFundMe campaign to raise financial support to help fund his legal proceedings against Rugby Australia and the New South Wales Waratahs.

After having his contract torn up by Rugby Australia, Mr Folau filed applications with the Fair Work Commission against both Rugby Australia Ltd and Waratahs Rugby Pty Ltd seeking a declaration that his employment was unlawfully terminated because of his religion.

The request for funding support comes after Rugby Australia announced it would “divert significant resources” to fight, in court, the issue of whether Mr Folau’s employment contract was unlawfully terminated after he shared messages from the Bible on social media.

Mr Folau said the principle at stake in his case is both an employment dispute and about defending the right to religious freedom.

“Whether or not people believe in the Bible, or share my beliefs, one of the fundamental rights we share as Australians is to practise and express our faiths without discrimination in the workplace.

“My faith is the most important thing in my life, and it defines me as a person. I believe it is my duty as a Christian to share the word of God, but sadly, doing so has meant I will likely never be allowed to play rugby in this country again. I do not believe this is right, or legal, in Australia.

“My wife Maria and I have already spent over \$100,000 of our own money, and that was just to try to deal with Rugby Australia’s internal tribunal processes. The donations I am asking for are to help fund the rest of my action in court.”

“Even if I win, Rugby Australia can appeal that decision, and there is every chance a prominent case like this could take years and eventually end up in the High Court of Australia.

“I know I am putting myself, my reputation and my future on the line, but I believe this cause is too important to stop now. I have the fight of my life on my hands, and I thank those who will stand with me from the bottom of my heart.”

Donations to the Israel Folau Legal Action Fund can be made online at:

[au.gofundme.com/Israel-folau-legal-action-fund](https://au.gofundme.com/Israel-folau-legal-action-fund)

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**For further information:**

[www.israelfolau.com.au](http://www.israelfolau.com.au)