

Queensland Community Safety Bill 2024

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To whom it may concern. I would like to express my concerns with the proposed Queensland community safety bill. I believe this Bill submission date should be extended to allow for appropriate scrutiny. The way this Bill has been tabled and rushed through makes the Labor Party look dishonest. As a law-abiding firearms owner, I am one of many who is sick and tired of getting attacked and having our civil liberties squashed under the boots of bureaucracy. The constant barrage of insults and fearmongering hurled at gun owners is quite loathsome. And some of the proposed laws in the new Bill are simply power grabs. If someone I know has a car accident should I lose my car license. It seems that this is the chain of thought that is behind some of the proposed bill. I'm also worried that several of the proposed changes are very open to interpretation and are very grey. Below is a list of objections that I have copied from the shooters union Australia website. They're all valid points that should be taken into account. Regards Chris

Wieder [REDACTED] DOUBLING OF LICENCE APPLICATION DISQUALIFICATION PERIOD Under Division 2, Clause 56, the period disqualifying people with certain criminal convictions from applying for a licence is extended from 5 years to 10 years. Our concern with this element is that there is no grandfathering in of people who, under the current legislation have served their time and the current disqualification period then successfully obtained a licence after demonstrating their reform. For example, a person who was convicted of a disqualifying offence six years ago, and subsequently successfully applied for a gun licence which they have held for two years, would find themselves stripped of their licence and guns under this Bill despite having been deemed a Fit and Proper Person under the current Legislation. LICENCE DISQUALIFICATION PERIOD APPLIES EVEN FOR WITHDRAWN OR QUASHED DVOs Under Division 2, Clause 58 (5)(b), someone is considered not to be a fit and proper person to have a gun licence if, within the last 5 years, "a domestic violence order, other than a temporary protection order, has been made against the person." The fact the DVO was made in the first place is the disqualifying factor, and there is no provision for this to be disregarded if the DVO is subsequently withdrawn or quashed. Given the potential for DVOs to be weaponised by abusive or manipulative partners, this clause could inadvertently make a licensed gun owner who is a victim of domestic abuse or manipulation doubly victimised by giving the abusive/manipulative person another weapon to attack the shooter with – "Do what I want or I'll tell the police you abuse me and you'll lose your guns for years just on my say-so." FIREARM PROHIBITION ORDERS While the intent of FPOs is clearly to stop obvious criminals from having access to guns (which they aren't supposed to now, so making it double illegal isn't likely to change that), the criteria under which an FPO can be granted is worryingly broad and could easily capture licensed firearm owners or other people who have the misfortune to be related to that person – and being "an associate of a recognised offender" is highly likely to create "Fit and proper person" issues for a firearms licence-holder or applicant, too. S141E (2)(d) lists one of the criteria for potentially being eligible for a FPO as being "whether the individual is an associate of a recognised offender" S141E (4) states that someone is considered an associate of a recognised offender if that person(a) has a romantic or familial relationship with the offender; or (b) associates with the offender in a way that involves seeking out or accepting the offender's company, whether the association happens in person or in another way, including, for example, electronically. We understand this to mean that police could apply for Firearm Prohibition Orders against the spouse, children, or parents (among others) of an offender merely because of who they are related to, and not because they have done anything wrong themselves. Another interpretation is this could go so far as to include the co-workers of someone subject to an FPO – after all, they do "accept" the person's company, even if it's

because they have to since they work at the same place. There's more – S141(2) (e) says another matter for considering the issue of an FPO is “whether the individual has communicated in a public forum, or to another person, that the individual intends or wishes to commit a serious offence; Examples of public forums— social media sites, online forum.” A concerning interpretation of this section is that a licensed firearm owner could find themselves liable for an FPO because of someone they converse with on social media in a discussion group – but have not discussed anything criminal with – has an FPO. Or worse – that a licensed firearms owner could find themselves potentially subject to an FPO because someone “felt threatened” by the licensed shooters’ hunting pictures (showing them with a rifle) on social media or didn’t like a satirical or sarcastic comment and interpreted it as a threat, or even took a joke comment about (for example) robbing a bank to pay bills seriously. And as the cherry on top, S141(2)(d) says that when considering a FPO, they can also take into account “the individual’s behaviour, particularly violent or aggressive behaviour or behaviour involving the use of a weapon”. There are countless ways this could be used against a firearms owner, especially one who disagrees with popular opinions on any one of a number of subjects.

REMOVAL OF SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENTS^{745D} allows for a police officer to order an online content provider to take down content which depicts a number of (mostly illegal) activities – but is broadly worded, and includes “an offence involving a weapon” which the police officer believes was posted for “increasing the person’s reputation, or another person’s reputation, because of their involvement in the unlawful conduct.” This applies outside Queensland, too – the material just has to be posted on the online service “by a person who was in Queensland or ordinarily resident in Queensland”. One possible interpretation of this is that a shooter who visits a foreign country and legally goes hunting with a semi-automatic centrefire rifle, then posts photos of their successful hunt (including with the rifle), could be forced to take those pictures off social media on the grounds that the person is posting images of something that’s an offence in Queensland (taking a Category D Firearm hunting) in a way that increases their reputation because they are doing something overseas they cannot legally do here.

Division 2, Clause 12 of the Bill introduces a 3 year imprisonment penalty for Going Armed in Public so as to Cause Fear offence “if the offender publishes material on a social media platform or an online social network to (a) advertise the offender’s involvement in the offence; or (b) advertise the act or omission constituting the offence”. We believe this could be extremely easily be abused against shooters taking hunting or range photos in certain circumstances. We understand the intent of these requirements are to stop out of control youth from posting videos of themselves stealing cars and joyriding in them, but believe the laws need to be more narrowly written to ensure they are not used as a broad “Forced removal of anything online the authorities don’t like” law.