

To the Committee Secretary  
Community Support and Services Committee

Thank you for the opportunity to make this submission.

I am strongly opposed to the Public Health and Other Legislation (Extension of Expiring Provisions) Amendment Bill 2022 for the following reasons:

### **1. Hardship to the Community Services Sector**

- It is my experience and observation that the Community Services Sector has been severely and adversely affected by a Critical Worker Shortage since the Workers in a healthcare setting (Covid-19 Vaccination Requirements) Direction (No. 2) came into effect on 16<sup>th</sup> December, 2021.
- Agencies are enduring hardship through the lack of availability of fully vaccinated, experienced staff and volunteers to adequately provide vital services to vulnerable people.
- While there is some provision for unvaccinated people to continue working in this sector, the conditions are onerous and the workers experience extreme inconvenience and feelings of discrimination.
- The Critical Worker Shortage provision ends on 17<sup>th</sup> March at which time Community Service Agencies will have much difficulty in continuity of service provision.
- An extension of the Public Health and Other Legislations (Extension of Expiring Provisions) Amendment Bill 2022 will see vulnerable people, who rely on the Community Services Sector, without support. This will negatively affect their physical and mental wellbeing and cause a greater demand on public health services which are already in a critical state.

### **2. Hardship to Accommodation, Retail and Hospitality Sectors**

- At the present time, it is understood anecdotally, that Queenslanders are taking their holidays interstate where venue restrictions on unvaccinated people no longer apply. Some family events are being relocated away from Queensland so that all family members may attend. This means loss of business in the accommodation, retail and hospitality sectors in Queensland which have suffered so much through the pandemic.
- Venue restrictions on unvaccinated people have forced the cancellation of weddings, family celebrations, fundraising dinners etc due to the limit of 20 people if even one unvaccinated person is in attendance. Again, adding to the loss of business experienced by business owners.
- In the light of the current evidence that both vaccinated and unvaccinated people can transmit the virus, this restriction is illogical, unnecessary and creating hardship to the hospitality sector.
- All businesses in the Accommodation, retail and hospitality sectors need to be released from restrictions so that they can thrive by operating freely for and

with all people. Therefore, it is imperative for the good of the economy and the wellbeing of business owners and employees that the above Bill not be passed into legislation.

Mrs Juliet Ballinger

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3<sup>rd</sup> March, 2022