

03/03/2022

Committee Secretary  
Community Support and Services Committee  
Parliament House  
George Street  
BRISBANE QLD 4000

[cssc@parliament.qld.gov.au](mailto:cssc@parliament.qld.gov.au)

Dear Sir/Madam

I write in opposition to extending the government's emergency powers under the Public Health and Other Legislation (Extension of Expiring Provisions) Amendment Bill 2022.

**Question: "Is there still a public health emergency?"**

The definition of "public health emergency" in the Public Health Act 2005 is "*an event or a series of events that has contributed to, or may contribute to, **serious adverse effects on the health of persons** in Queensland.*"

Looking at the current circumstances, it is clear the "public health emergency" as defined above has passed and an extension of the powers is NOT required. Please review the following points:

1. **The Omicron peak has well and truly passed.** The borders are open and Omicron is circulating in the community and will continue to do so, whether or not masks are required and the unvaccinated are restricted from attending certain venues.
2. **COVID-19 dire predictions based on modelling and best medical advice have not eventuated.** The declaration of a public health emergency is no longer required. The number of people who have died of, or with, COVID-19 in Queensland is 564, as at 01/03/2022, out of a total number of 572,399 recorded cases and out of a total population of 5.2m. Approximately 1 in 1000 people (0.1%) who contracted COVID-19 passed away. Approximately 1 in 10,000 people (0.01%) in Queensland have died of/with COVID-19. The average age of those who passed away of/with COVID-19 is over 80, and the ABS advises that Australia-wide 92% of people who passed away of/with COVID-19 had underlying health conditions. COVID-19 has been nowhere near as devastating as was predicted.
3. **Most Queenslanders now have immunity through either having contracted COVID-19 or by being vaccinated.** More than 90% of Queenslanders (16+) are double dosed and over 10% of Queenslanders have already contracted COVID-19 (572,399 cases as at 01/03/2022, out of a population of 5.2 million). There is a very low number of people in Queensland who do not have COVID-19 antibodies.

4. **Vaccines for future variants (should they eventuate) will be available as needed.** The pharmaceutical companies have indicated they are still assessing whether or not a vaccine is required for the Omicron variant, and that they are in a position to continue creating new vaccines as variants emerged if needed.
5. **COVID-19 is now a treatable disease.** Approved anti-viral drugs and other pharmaceuticals are now available to treat people who are seriously ill with COVID-19. As these pharmaceuticals become more available, the number of deaths will diminish.

There is simply no public health emergency in Queensland and no valid reason for the extension of the government's emergency powers under the Public Health and Other Legislation (Extension of Expiring Provisions) Amendment Bill 2022.

Thank you for considering my submission.

(name withheld)