

4 March 2022

Committee Secretary
Community Support and Services Committee
Email: cssc@parliament.qld.gov.au

Dear Committee Secretary

RE: Public Health and Other Legislation (Extension of Expiring Provisions) Amendment Bill 2022 (BILL)

I **do not** support the proposed extension of the state of emergency or the Public Health and other Legislation (Extension of Expiring Provisions) Amendment Bill of 2022.

In recent days we have been informed by the Premier, the Health Minister and the CHO that we (the state of Queensland) have responded to the challenges of Covid-19 better than anticipated.

Queensland has already been under a state of emergency (SOE) for over two and vaccination rates in this State which are over 90% is one of the highest rates in the world.

In the last two years the SOE and response to the Covid-19 in Queensland has caused:

- Small businesses and tourism to be decimated.
- Job losses due to downturn in our economy and vaccine mandates.
- A rise in demand for mental health services

The CHO has noted (15 February 2022) that the current Omicron wave is coming to an end, thus all mandates and restrictions will be reviewed and an update provided by the end of February 2022.

As at 16 February 2022, this Bill quotes 399 deaths from 507,746 cases (IE 0.0785% of Covid-19 deaths in Queensland). The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) reported that the median age of males who died from COVID-19 in Australia is 81.2 which exactly matches the life expectancy of a male in Australia. For women, the median age of females who died from COVID-19 in Australia is 86.0 which is very similar to the female life expectancy in Australia of 85.3. This shows that the COVID-19 deaths align with the general life expectancy in our country.

Given we are quickly moving from pandemic to endemic, I do not agree it is appropriate to either extend the timing or the scope of the Bill. The current provisions end on 30 April 2022 – and should not be extended beyond this date.

There is also limited information regarding ongoing review and amendments to this Bill. If progressed, including further details regarding this process would provide confidence to Queenslanders that only short-term, reasonable measures that align with current health advice are being introduced – rather than broad, expanded approaches with over-extended end dates. This Bill decimates the right to freedom and I reject the Bill and the extension to the SOE.



Yours sincerely
Matthew Smith

