

**SUBMISSION TO A COMMITTEE ENQUIRY – EXTENSION OF EMERGENCY POWERS BILL**

Public Health and Other Legislation (Extension of Expiring Provisions Bill) 2022.

SUBMITTED BY: Jan Van Wijk

3/3/22

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to express my concerns over the Queensland government's proposal to extend their emergency powers until the end of October. I do not believe that this is justified.

**EASING OF RESTRICTIONS AND MILD EFFECTS OF OMNIBRON – WHERE IS THE JUSTIFICATION?**

Around the world, vaccine mandates and restrictions are being dropped. In the *United Kingdom*, the job mandates for NHS (National Health Service) workers were dropped ahead of the April dateline for compulsory vaccination and *many states in Canada have also removed vaccination mandates*. Recently, [REDACTED] said that *Omicron is no more deadly than influenza and called for an end to most job mandates in W.A.* Anastasia Palaszcuk has announced that *masks will no longer be required* inside workplaces, schools and shops from 6pm on Friday March 4<sup>th</sup>. She also announced that hospitality staff and patrons will not be required to wear masks also.

On the 25<sup>th</sup> of February, it was also reported that in NZ, a High Court challenge questioning the legality of Covid-19 vaccination mandates for Police and Defence Force employees was upheld, with the court determined that the government mandate is an unjustified incursion on the Bill of Rights.

*Despite the case numbers dropping every day, the opening of borders and the lifting of mask mandates announcement last week, what justification does the Queensland government have in extending their emergency powers until October and continuing vaccine mandates that have destroyed people's lives through the loss of jobs and businesses. Enough is enough.*

**FEAR MONGERING, APARTHEID, VILIFICATION AND DISCRIMINATORY PRACTICES NEED TO STOP**

Both the media and the government have used the deaths of older Australians to cause fear amongst our community and actively turned its citizens against another as media. Politicians blamed those who were unvaccinated for the spread. *Suddenly those who chose not to take a vaccine, that could potentially harm them, were vilified and discriminated against.* Teachers, ambulance workers, nurses and doctors who were once hailed as front-line heroes for going into work when little was known about this virus, were *suddenly the brunt of abuse and discrimination for wanting to make an informed choice about whether to take a vaccine. This is unacceptable.*

The *mental anguish* caused by the vaccine mandates, which *forcibly coerced its citizens to take a vaccine to put food on their tables for their families is not only unethical but illegal.* Informed consent has been rightly viewed as the protection of citizen's basic human rights. This is at the very core of the *Nuremberg Code*, which has been violated through the implementation of vaccine mandates.

*The strain on support and counselling services to assist citizens who have lost their businesses, jobs, families and relationships will only increase the longer these mandates are in place. The environment created by this legislation is toxic.*

*Data has shown that vaccines do not stop the spread or prevent vaccinated people from catching or spreading COVID. In some cases, the vaccines have proven to be more dangerous than the disease itself.* I have a friend who was extremely healthy and fit. She is now in a terrible state after receiving one jab of Astra Zeneca and is now suffering from myocarditis and a range of other strange and debilitating conditions. A business owner, she is now struggling to work. A family member, colleagues and personal contacts have also shared effects from the vaccine that they were forced to take.

## TIME FOR TRANSPARENCY, HONESTY AND CLEAR AND ACCESSIBLE MEANS OF REPORTING AND COMMUNICATION

Every year until 2020, there has been data on the death toll caused by flu. It is concerning to me that there are no longer any flu deaths reported but all seem to be lumped in with the COVID data. Indeed, it has been acknowledged by a TGA official during a recent interview with Senator Gerard Rennick, that if a person has died and they have COVID at the time, that the TGA do not carry out autopsies, but they can be counted as a COVID death in their data system.

*Transparency around the process used by the TGA to collect and analyse their data is concerning, and also the ability of doctors and patients to have their adverse effects reports taken seriously.* For example: <https://www.facebook.com/gerard.rennick/videos/342151051169424>

As a citizen of Queensland, I am more concerned about what appears to be more about *an agenda of control than what is common sense and what is the honest truth.* Like most people, I have woken up that the media reports are not reporting accurate information, and I can no longer trust the narrative fed to us daily by the mainstream news channels.

*It is time for truth, the right to choose and the mandates lifted.*

## PERSONAL EFFECTS OF THE MANDATES

I have had *significant personal battles* because of these mandates, and I have had enough. *I am a teacher with 32 years of experience.* I am highly valued by my principal, colleagues, students, parents and the school community. *Due to the vaccine mandates, I was unable to continue in my role at the school. I have suffered major stress and periods of depression and anxiety as a result.* The job that I loved and did so well, was stolen from me. I was forced to come into school to remove all my possessions from my classroom just after a close family member had died and we were planning his funeral. It was devastating. I stood in my classroom and cried.

Many experienced and valued staff left because of the vaccine mandates. At the beginning of the year, I was called back to work to fill a part time role as a temporary critical workplace appointment. I have taken daily RAT tests and worn my mask every day to fulfil the governmental requirements. However, unless these mandates are overturned, *I will be without a job again unless I take a job which I would not otherwise choose.* Given the effects of various vaccines on family and friends, I am *rightfully concerned* about the effect that it might have on my body.

*The vaccine mandate is unjust and is continuing to have a massive impact on my mental health and overall wellbeing. It will also have a significant effect on my workplace as my expertise, experience and relationships formed over a long period of service, will be very difficult to replace.*

I have been told that I am *unable to do relief work under the critical workers shortage whilst there are vaccinated staff who are willing to work in my place.* However, I would ask you how this is a good solution

when there are limited staff available, and they *may not be suited to work in every role within a school*? Does this mean that a high school teacher can be placed into an early childhood setting rather than having a healthy unvaccinated teacher come in who is highly qualified for that setting? There is something terribly wrong here. *Surely, the welfare of the children should be the highest priority.*

## EFFECTS ON SCHOOL COMMUNITIES

The forced vaccination mandate, slow start to the school year and forced mask-wearing is having a huge impact on the mental and physical well-being of the remaining teachers and the students and families in the school.

*My vaccinated colleagues, who have remained at school, are overworked, under resourced and highly stressed due to staff deficits. Executive staff have been under the pump, having to take many extra classes to fill teacher shortages and are not getting to do their own work. Teaching staff are expected to take on more lunch duties and are struggling under the load of having to deliver teach, assess and report ten weeks of material within an eight-week term.*

*Senior and experienced unvaccinated staff, who were allowed back for a short period under the critical worker shortage clause, are not allowed on site again after Friday, when this arrangement finishes. This has meant that some teachers in middle management positions, have had to take on extra administrative duties on top of their own work to fill the gaps. Once again, this has left the school in a state of high stress as executive staff and mentor teachers are no longer able to assist staff who are already struggling under pressure, when they would be able to do so if the vaccine mandates were ended. Some staff are at breaking point as they are forced to take on more and more duties, classes, and extra responsibilities. Also, the governmental "goalposts" keep moving at short notice.*

Recently, with the implementation of new COVID policies at the beginning of this year, our *Principal had to read, process and communicate the contents of large Educational policy documents that he received only two days before he needed to action them.* These policies were detailed and outlined the policies for mask wearing, social distancing, COVID cleaning, rulings on excursions and gatherings and arrangements for parents. This was no mean feat, and he was exhausted. He has been a champion in the way that he has supported staff through his holiday break, scrambled to fulfil his governmental responsibilities and to fill positions to keep the school running. I feel so much for him, as he had no rest during his holiday period as he had to support staff all through his holiday break, scramble to fulfil his governmental responsibilities and try to fill positions for the coming year. He would breathe a sigh of relief if the vaccine mandates were over.

*The mental toll of the vaccine mandates has been huge. Our principal had a significant number of passionate staff in tears in his office last year, who struggled to stay composed as they soldiered on in their classrooms and other roles, knowing that they were faced with losing their jobs. Many felt great mental anguish as they were forced to put aside their concerns about the safety of the vaccinations to put food on their families' tables as theirs was the only source of family income. A pregnant teacher, afraid of the potential effects for her baby, felt pressured to take the job to "do the right thing". A staff member, with a young family, felt great fear before taking the vaccine but did so because she felt she had no other option. They were not the only ones who caved in under the pressure. A no job, no job policy is immoral and unethical.*

*The mental health of all staff is seriously at risk and these very real resourcing and mental issues have had a deep impact on the students and parents as well.*

*The quality of staff and their years of experience and expertise lost because of the vaccine mandates has been irreplaceable and the lack of resourcing for 2022 in regional areas particularly has taken its toll. In Central Queensland, it is already difficult to attract high quality teachers and, whilst University students have been*

*previously accessed in Queensland to fill staffing gaps, they will never replace the years of knowledge and skill that has been lost.*

The cost of the vaccination mandate in terms of mental health and educational outcomes for students, will be devastating. I beseech you to retract this mandate and to restore teacher's jobs before it is too late.

#### DECEPTIVE MISCOMMUNICATION OF EFFECTS OF MANDATES ON SCHOOLS

There is a disconnect between what is happening in real life and the understanding shown by the Education Minister, the Hon. Grace Grace in her recent parliamentary speech. She expressed the view that the vaccine mandates have had no impact on teacher numbers. This could not be further from the truth. Her speech can be viewed on the following link. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MVzXdz\\_QHMY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MVzXdz_QHMY)

At present, there are many teachers who are *inexperienced and unqualified* but have been allowed permission to teach to fulfil the shortfall in our schools. This is hardly an acceptable solution when teachers who are healthy and highly experienced are sitting at home due to these extreme vaccine measures. Schools, particularly in regional areas of Queensland, are struggling to find staff to fill the critical shortfall caused by the loss of experienced staff after the vaccine mandates were enforced.

*Some schools are resorting to using online tuition as they cannot staff all their classes.* This is quite concerning when this must be applied to foundational key subject areas such as Mathematics in high school settings. Students need teachers to be there to scaffold their learning and to help them process and apply information in these fundamental, important areas of the curriculum.

Text messages shared by Ed Qld. teachers show that the Queensland Education Department has offered teachers packages which include two return flights from Brisbane during the term, free continuous accommodation in a serviced apartment and a kilometric allowance to provide for driving from home to temporary location. This text advertisement said that *"you don't need to be experienced in the teaching areas listed, only willing to teach them"*. This is *hardly a glowing report of an education system that is the envy of all other States.*

*I believe that Queensland citizens and the children of our state deserve much better than this.*

*It is time to drop the mandates and not to artificially perpetuate a crisis by extending emergency powers. There has been enough pain and anguish to last a long, long time and the economic and social problems already caused by these mandates will not be easily overcome.*

#### THE PERSONAL FREEDOM, EQUALITY AND RIGHTS OF ALL AUSTRALIANS ARE AT STAKE

The personal freedoms of the people of Australia, I believe, will become the biggest issue of all in the coming elections. People are absolutely fed up. *Initially, the emergency powers were brought in to manage what was deemed an "emergency". However, we are no longer in an emergency and an extension of governmental emergency powers cannot be justified. What started out to be "temporary" emergency measures have been stretched out for two years already. Aussies have been through enough. It is time for the mandates to end.*

*Politicians are elected to represent the people of their electorates. I am asking that you would recommend ending the emergency powers of the Queensland government and to stop all discriminatory practices against unvaccinated citizens including the vaccine mandates.*

I believe that this issue will be the greatest determiner in the results of the voting in the upcoming Federal elections and in the State elections as they roll around. The Labour Victorian Government is up for election at the end of this year.

The grass roots protest across Australia is not a small minority of people as the media would suggest. The videos from the recent Canberra demonstration, shows that ***there is a huge wave of people who are calling for an overturning of the vaccine mandates and an end to the governmental controls***. Many people are losing faith in both the major parties and are expressing that they will vote according to who will stand up for their freedoms and for common sense around the removing of these mandates. ***We need a government we can trust.***

Please know that I will be watching carefully the decisions made in this committee and the parliamentary sitting and ***implore you to stand up for what is right***, as will millions of others in our nation. ***Restore our jobs. Take away the vaccine mandates.***

Yours in anticipation,

Jan Van Wijk

Primary teacher affected by vaccine mandates.

Central Queensland Region