

4th March 2022

Heath Argent
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

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

Dear Committee Secretary,

I DO NOT SUPPORT extending the Public Health Act 2005 to increase powers for emergency officers and the Chief Health Officer in Queensland.

I DO NOT SUPPORT amendments to the Corrective Services Act 2006, Disaster Management Act 2003 and Mental Health Act 2016 to support the extension of the public health response.

I DO NOT SUPPORT the continuation of a head of power in the COVID-19 Emergency Response Act 2020 to make regulations to facilitate transitional arrangements for the temporary framework.

Effects on the Community

Under the powers given to him, the Chief Health Officer, along with our government, has made decisions with a focus on preventing the spread of COVID 19, but with little acknowledgement of the impact these decisions are having on the broader community.

- Mental Health services are overwhelmed
- hospitals, schools, paramedics, businesses are all suffering staff shortages due to vaccination mandates. Patients are not receiving high quality care and our children do not have stability and consistency in their classroom. The longer this goes on, the more damage will be done.
- healthy, highly experienced and skilled professionals are waiting for mandates to be lifted instead of doing what they do best. They are ready, willing and able to work.
- people are losing their jobs, therefore struggling emotionally and financially
- businesses are spending funds on implementing mandates (even though vaccines do not stop transmission)
- communities are being segregated, divided and marginalised

Queenslanders are suffering! The cost to our communities caused by these decisions, are far greater reaching than the virus itself.

Is the Pandemic Over?

The premier has stated many times that 90% is the vaccination target for Queensland. With over 90% of the population vaccinated and protected from serious illness, Qld Health data is showing a reduction in cases. High vaccination rates, combined with natural immunity, according to WHO, will provide sufficient protection for our population, seeing the situation move from pandemic to endemic.

Data and Evidence

Annastacia Palaszczuk has referred to the Doherty Institute modelling predictions, that even with 70% of the population vaccinated, 80 people will die each day six months after the outbreak (2240 a month). This grossly overestimates the severity of this virus and while these models and forecasts supported the early implementation of public health emergency measures, the latest certified data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics clearly indicates

that the figures for COVID-19 fatalities DO NOT warrant the continuation of the current public emergency health measures.

- Between March 2020 until the end of January 2022, ABS identified 273 901 Australians died. **0.9% had COVID**. Compared to other diseases causing death, COVID should not be causing such alarm.
- 2 639 people died **with** or **from** COVID (Compare this to the average annual number of deaths due to influenza and pneumonia between 2015 and 2019 which was 2 908).
- The majority of COVID deaths, **92%**, had other underlying health issues. An average of roughly 3 diseases or conditions per person. 35% of those people had a chronic heart issue. This proves that COVID is not dangerous for healthy people.
- There were 83 people who died **of** COVID.

Government and media reports suggest that:

- Anyone entering hospital with COVID, despite not being in hospital because of COVID, has been recorded as a COVID statistic.
- COVID numbers are inclusive of anyone who has recently had COVID prior to entering hospital, even if they had recovered.
- Case numbers in schools have not increased at the expected rate.

These inclusions in hospitalisations, overinflate and overestimate the impact COVID is having on our health and on our hospitals. Our hospitals are NOT overrun with COVID cases, if anything, they are suffering staff shortages due to mandates which have been placed by the CHO under his emergency powers. This supports the lifting of the emergency powers, in fact demonstrates that the decisions made by the CHO may be detrimental to the safety and wellbeing of the population.

The pandemic stage of this virus is over. Data and evidence shows that numbers are reducing and people are safe from serious illness. Mandates introduced under the emergency powers are no longer working or necessary. It's time to focus resources on protecting the vulnerable and letting everyone else get back to normality - end mandates, lock downs, border closures and mask wearing.

Government policies should be based on data and evidence, not fear and emotion. It's time to take a step forward and do what will provide the greatest good, for the greatest number of Queenslanders.

The evidence is clear which is why I STRONGLY BELIEVE this Bill SHOULD NOT be extended past 30 April 2022, and the Minister for Health must now end the declared public health emergency.

Yours sincerely,

Heath Argent

