

# PUBLIC HEALTH AND OTHER LEGISLATION (EXTENSION OF EXPIRING PROVISIONS) AMENDMENT BILL 2022

3<sup>rd</sup> March 2022

I'm writing in regards to the proposed bill to extend the emergency powers in Queensland. I do not believe it's necessary to extend these powers until 31<sup>st</sup> October 2022. To support this, I'd like to address some points in the Statement of Compatibility which was prepared by the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services:

1. *"Another example is a direction issued by the Chief Health Officer which may require people entering certain public places or working at certain high-risk places such as residential aged care, shared disability accommodation, places of detention, childcare and schools and health facilities to be vaccinated. However, in practice there are exemptions from being vaccinated including if a person has a recognised medical contraindication. Higher rates of vaccinations, particularly in high-risk settings, also provide increased levels of protection for vulnerable cohorts in the community including the elderly and immunocompromised."* (page 8)

- The Queensland Government, via the acting Chief Health Officer at the time, effectively mandated COVID-19 vaccination for the hospitality industry as well. This certainly is not a "high-risk" setting akin to the above examples. Medical exemptions are notoriously hard to come by and COVID-19 vaccination is not preventing transmission.

2. *"The Bill engages the right to privacy by continuing to authorise the Chief Health Officer and emergency officers to interfere with a person's bodily autonomy. For example, restricting a person's movement or making vaccine requirements."* (page 8)

- The power to restrict a person's movement and require someone to take a provisionally approved vaccine – with minimal long term safety data and known serious side effects e.g. death – is not a power which should be given to anyone. Furthermore, Queenslanders have had no say in who is employed as the Chief Health Officer.

3. *"Every person has the right to access health services without discrimination and must not be refused necessary emergency medical treatment."* (page 12)

- Queensland Government's mandates have emboldened doctors to pick and choose which patients they want to see e.g. to no longer take appointments from those who are not COVID-19 vaccinated.

4. *"The continuation of the amendment is considered the best way to reduce the administrative burden of the chief executive and Chief Health Officer during the COVID-19 emergency"* (page 18)

- Reducing an "administrative burden" for a very highly paid employee is not a reason to impinge upon people's human rights.

5. *"Freedom of movement: The amendments to require certain cohorts to prepay quarantine fees may limit the freedom to enter Queensland, if they have the practical effect of restricting someone from entering the State if they do not have the financial means to pay."* (page 22)

- COVID-19 spread like wildfire in Queensland once the border was reopened quarantine-free to COVID-19 vaccinated persons. It's evident the vaccination hasn't stopped transmission. Yet only unvaccinated international arrivals now need to quarantine for 14 days and at their own cost. This

amendment means if they cannot afford to prepay their mandated quarantine fees, Queenslanders who need to travel overseas may not be able to return home.

6. *“Section 17(c) of the Human Rights Act provides that a person must not be subjected to medical or scientific experimentation or treatment without the person’s full, free and informed consent.”* (page 33)

- The Queensland Government has introduced mandates which have emboldened and/or mandated employers to force their own COVID-19 vaccination requirements on their employees. There’s not much room for consent when the alternative is financial strain due to no income. With the new ATAGI terminology of “up to date”, this leaves even more room to continue the mandating of additional COVID-19 booster vaccinations.

7. *“The amendment to provide for the longer extension of the COVID-19 disaster situation limits a person’s rights to freedom of movement because the COVID-19 declared disaster allows for powers to be exercised that include controlling the movement of persons into, out of, or around the declared area for the disaster situation and closing a road to traffic. The exercise of these powers may result in persons being prevented from entering particular areas or the dispersal of groups of persons.”* (page 38)

- Freedom of movement has been impacted already with the introduction of draconian and discriminatory vaccine passports. As a democracy, we should be moving away from forbidding people from entry to certain venues on the basis of whether or not they’re vaccinated (or “up to date”) for COVID-19. The science is clear that the vaccination does not stop transmission nor prevent a vaccinated person from catching it. The extension of the emergency powers conveniently means the Chief Health Officer can ensure protests – which could very well be in relation to emergency powers – are forbidden.

8. *“The amendment will extend the possible length of a declaration to up to 90 days, which is a significant increase from the current provision which only allows for declarations and then extensions of up to 14 days at a time.”* (page 40)

- It seems unnecessary to make such a lengthy extension in the amendment two years into the pandemic; especially when we’re now transitioning to living with COVID.

Extension of these powers will continue to impact negatively upon Queenslanders’ lives. It’s time we really start living with COVID and move away from extending emergency powers. It’s time to stop shutting down businesses and affecting their income stream by making them limit who their customers can be.

It’s time to stop the mental health toll of the entire population.

It’s time to stop mandating provisionally approved vaccines and causing potential physical harm (where there is risk, there must be choice).

It’s time to stop affecting our freedom of movement.

It’s time to move on.

Thank you for your time.

Kind Regards

Georgina Bradshaw

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