

From: [Lee Maidens](#)
To: [Community Support and Services Committee](#); [Noosa Electorate Office](#)
Subject: Objection to extension of emergency powers
Date: Friday, 4 March 2022 11:56:16 AM

Date: 04/03/2022

Submission

To the Committee Secretary,

Committee Secretary
Community Support and Services Committee
Parliament House
George Street
Brisbane Qld 4000

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

I write to the committee to clearly state my opposition to all parts of the Public Health and Other Legislation (Extension of Expiring Provisions) Amendment Bill 2022.

The maximum allowable extension of emergency powers may have been necessary during the peak of the pandemic, however the conditions under which the original 'Covid-19 Emergency' was declared have substantially changed over the past 2 years. The original Covid-19 variant presented a much greater mortality risk and risk of severe outcomes compared to the Omicron variant (BA.1), as well as less information was then known and less treatments were then available. Furthermore, Queensland's Covid-19 ICU admissions and hospitalisations are now decreasing and Queensland has recently opened its domestic borders, is accepting international travelers, is relaxing mask mandates and capacity limits and reviewing public health restrictions. Extending the expiring provisions by the maximum allowable amount under these conditions is scientifically unjustified, as well as morally wrong towards its people, and would be a violation of Article 3 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Furthermore, the definition of 'Covid-19 emergency' as declared by the Health Minister under section 315 of Public Health Act 2005 needs to be reviewed and more appropriately defined as to not allow abuse of emergency powers. The language "an event or a serious of events that has contributed to or may contribute to serious adverse effects on the health of persons in Queensland" could be attributed to a multitude of diseases, health risks and other emergencies, but has historically only been invoked in absolutely severe and essential circumstances, which arguably the current Covid-19 situation in Queensland does not meet.

The Queensland people have essentially been held in a hostage like situation for the past 2 years, with requests of us ever changing and our state leaders “changing the goalposts” as they see fit. This is unacceptable. By extending the emergency powers, that allows this practice to continue - something that has cause insurmountable issues with children’s education, youth engagement, employment rates, mental health and more.

The Health Minister must declare an end to the public health emergency as soon as he/she is satisfied it is no longer necessary to exercise powers under section 324 Public Health Act 2005, but the Health Minister has not clarified what specific conditions/parameters would satisfy this declaration. This is despite the drastic improvement of the health risks presented by the original ‘Covid-19 emergency’ and despite countries around the world starting to treat Covid-19 as an endemic disease like ‘the flu’.

I ask that the committee request and review in detail the scientific literature and supporting evidence the Health Minister is relying on to justify a 6 month extension of the expiring provisions and what specific conditions in Queensland would satisfy a declaration of the end of the ‘Covid-19 emergency’ as defined by the Public Health Act 2005. The public release of this information is vital for government transparency, government oversight and to safeguard against potential abuse of the Public Health Act 2005.

Regards
Lee Maidens



Sent from my iPhone