
From: Jo Bikaunieks [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, 8 March 2022 4:13 PM
To: Community Support and Services Committee
Subject: SOE EXTENSION

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Good afternoon

I am emailing you to ask that you DO NOT support extending the Qld COVID-19 State of Emergency until the 31st October 2022.

Queensland residents have done everything that was asked of them over the past 2 years. We have high vaccination rates and our cases, hospitalisations, and deaths are continuing to decline. We need life to go on and return to normal (not the new normal!) Tourism and hospitality has been decimated by the restrictions and mandates under the State of Emergency. Businesses are still on the brink of bankruptcy and owners and staff are under enormous pressure. Mental health is declining and support services are understaffed.

There is no justification in extending the SOE past March. If this is extended it will be the end of many small businesses here in Queensland . We cannot continue to force these restrictions and mandates onto both locals and visitors. Whilst the rest of the world is dropping all restrictions the Qld government seems determined to continue with the madness.

We need to be open to all, local, interstate, international, vaccinated or unvaccinated. Qld needs to attract business from across the world and any restrictions will be a deterrent. Tourism and hospitality will continue to be crushed and this will have flow on effects across the entire community.

I live in Cairns but have a small business in Kuranda that is reliant on tourism. It has never been so quiet, not even in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic. I have cut my operating days from 6/7 to 4 days per week. My daily revenue is running at 25%. While Queensland maintains the mandates and restrictions I see no hope that this is going to improve. Who is going to chose to come to Australia when travel anywhere else in the world is easy and relaxed.

There are dire staff shortages across so many sectors inc health, aged and disability care, education. The vaccine mandates across all sectors and including all Qld govt Departments such as TMR , DES, Emergency Services etc need to be abolished. These departments are losing hundreds of long term, highly qualified staff. This knowledge and experience cannot be replaced. Recently we have had volunteers in SE Qld flood areas being turned away by the SES because of their vaccine status. We have lost Dr's, nurses, paramedics, scientists, teachers, firefighters and surf lifesavers due to these mandates. Lives will continue to be lost because of this long after Covid disappears.

My daughter works in aged and disability care and there isn't enough staff to provide care services to the most vulnerable in our communities.

My husband's employer is about to lose countless experienced staff due to vaccine mandates. Some of the employees have been there for more than 25years whilst some are young and enthusiastic in their dream career. My son works on a boat that mandated vaccination - guess what all the crew caught Covid. If their boat was a Pfizer trial the efficacy of the vaccine would have been ZERO!

Overseas inc New Zealand and interstate these vaccine requirements are being quashed by judicial reviews and courts. If the Queensland government continues with these mandates under the SOE we will be left behind.

It is now blatantly obvious that infection with Covid 19 does not discriminate between the vaccinated or the unvaccinated and therefore common sense would tell us that the vaccine mandates and restrictions are pointless.

Please do not support any extension of the Qld COVID-19 State of Emergency

Regards

Jo Bikaunieks



(small business owner - Cairns)

Sent from my iPad