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To: Community Support and Services Committee
Subject: End Emergency Powers

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To whom it may concern

I am writing this letter regarding the bill being put forward to parliament to extend the current Public Health and other Legislation bill to October 31, 2022. I am strongly opposed to the extension of this bill and the powers it affords to the Chief Health Officer.

As we enter into the third year of this pandemic, it is clear Covid is no longer an emergency. Queensland has already experienced our expected peak and has come through with minimal impacts to the general public's health directly related to the Covid-19 virus. However, the effects of these mandates, restrictions and unlawful actions implemented by the orders of the public health act have had a tremendously detrimental impact on our society. These Public health mandates have not only devastated the broader Australian economy and public health but have directly affected everyone on a personal level.

The lockdowns, visitor restrictions, isolations and vaccine mandates implemented by this bill have been disproportional to the health risks of the Covid-19 virus. The effects it has had on people's mental health, business, job and financial security, ability to see loved ones and the divide it has created in society has been extensive. Not only have I personally spoken with many people who have experienced these issues, but the data has shown the rapid increase in suicides and mental health disorders since these mandates. During these unprecedented and frightening times, people need and want to gather around loved ones. When community and support are most valuable, these mandates have eliminated one of the most basic of human needs. Being unable to work, losing financial security, not being able to say goodbye to dying loved ones, families being separated, the financial costs of isolating, the division between vaccinated and unvaccinated, the fearmongering and scare tactics of the media and the restriction of easily getting access to café's, restaurants, healthcare and society, in general, are just some of the harsh realities of these Mandates. It is sad and disappointing to see the government's willingness to dictate how people live and risk our society by enforcing 'no jab, no job' policies in workforces such as policing, health and education, despite them already being understaffed and overworked.

I see no reason for extending the Public health bill when we have such high vaccination rates, minimal serious health effects from Covid-19 in both unvaccinated and vaccinated and little to no difference in being able to contract and transmit the virus despite being vaccinated or not. There is no reason for more power to be given to the State government for restrictions like lockdowns, border controls, and forced mandates.

Regards
Ella Tesch
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