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11 July 2016

Research Director
Health, Communities, Disability Services and
Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee
Via email: medicinalcannabis@parliament.qld.gov.au

To the Research Director

Thank you for providing AMA Queensland with the opportunity to give feedback on the *Public Health (Medicinal Cannabis) Bill 2016*.

AMA Queensland is the state's peak medical advocacy group, representing over 6000 medical practitioners across Queensland and throughout all levels of the health system. We have previously advocated publicly on issues of public health, vaccination and medical regulation. Our members take a very strong interest in both public health issues and medico-legal issues given their importance the health system in Queensland.

AMA Queensland strongly believes in an evidence based approach to the use of cannabis for medicinal purposes. In that light, we are supportive of the changes contained within this Bill. With the amendment made to the *Health (Drugs and Poisons) Regulation 1996* in late 2015 which allowed the use of medicinal cannabis for clinical trials, the need for a more comprehensive regulatory framework to regulate the use of medicinal cannabis products is understandably necessary.

However it is critical to ensure that the interplay between this piece of legislation and Commonwealth's *Therapeutic Goods Act 1989* fits into a national framework. We note the Minister's intention to make urgent amendments to the *Health (Drugs and Poisons) Regulation 1996* to insert a patient-class prescriber pathway in anticipation of the TGA's rescheduling of medicinal cannabis from schedule 9 to schedule 8. However, from our own enquiries into the matter it appears that the rescheduling has not yet occurred. AMA Queensland would appreciate advice on whether this apparent delay will have any impact in regards to this legislation.

AMA Queensland notes that clauses 193(3), 194(2) and 195(2) provide doctors working within the public system with protection from liability in relation to the use of medicinal cannabis. We wish to provide our particular appreciation toward this element of the legislation as we know it will provide legal certainty to our members. It is our understanding that this Bill also provides protection to General Practitioners who have been authorised to treat patients using medicinal cannabis via a single patient pathway, and provides recourse for GPs who have not been approved to do so. This will be similarly appreciated by our GP members.

In closing, AMA Queensland is supportive of the intent of this legislation and appreciates being provided with the opportunity to provide comment. If you require further information or assistance in this matter, please contact [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chris Zappala', written in a cursive style.

Dr Chris Zappala
President
Australian Medical Association Queensland