

**Health and Environment Committee**

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**From:** Lisa Byrne [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 12 January 2021 2:14 PM  
**To:** Health and Environment Committee  
**Subject:** Public Health and Other Legislation (Extension of Expiring Provisions) Amendment Bill 2020

**Categories:** Submission

Dear Committee Secretary, Health and Environment Committee

I oppose the extension of the below mentioned amendments made to the Public Health Act 2005 in response to COVID-19.

- the Governor-in-Council to extend the declared public health emergency for up to 90 days (*Public Health (Declared Public Health Emergencies) Amendment Act 2020*, which received assent on 7 February 2020);
- increased powers for emergency officers and the Chief Health Officer to limit, or respond to, the spread of COVID-19 in Queensland (*Public Health and Other Legislation (Public Health Emergency) Amendment Act 2020*, which received assent on 19 March 2020);
- the chief executive to delegate their powers to the Chief Health Officer or a person with expertise or experience in public health issues and improving the operation of the provisions of emergency officers (medical) to support the Queensland Government's response to COVID-19 (*Justice and Other Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response) Amendment Act 2020*, which received assent on 25 May 2020); and
- a person to be required to enter hotel quarantine at their own cost (*Community Services Industry (Portable Long Service Leave) Act 2020*, which received assent on 22 June 2020).

Of main concern, are the increased powers bestowed on the Chief Health Officer, who (I trust) is an expert in the field of public health, but does not have the breadth of knowledge and experience required to make decisions that impact all aspect of people's lives and the economic welfare of the state. While COVID-19 is a health issues, measures need to be considered holistically and objectively for the greater good of the economy and people.

Additionally, the CHO being given additional power directly as a result of COVID-19 presents the problem of a reckless agenda to manage the virus, while inadvertently fuelling mental health & obesity.

On the matter of hotel quarantine; I support the need in some instances — such as for international travellers — however there needs to be absolute clarity around conditions of travel and prior consent to quarantine conditions to eliminate last minute changes to conditions and passengers unwittingly subjected the hotel conditions and cost, such as when new Australian hotspots are declared. And more importantly a need for the prevalence of basic human rights whilst in hotel quarantine — such as access to fresh air.

Regards

Lisa Byrne  
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