

Health and Environment Committee

From: Christian Yates-Round [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, 13 January 2021 9:31 AM
To: Health and Environment Committee
Subject: NO, to extension of Public Health and Other Legislation (Extension of Expiring Provisions) Amendment Bill 2020

Categories: Submission

Dear Health and Environment Committee,

I oppose the option to extend the CHOs extraordinary power in accordance with below:

The amendments made to Chapter 8 of the *Public Health Act* allowed for:

- 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).

Amendments were also made to the *Mental Health Act 2016* through the *Justice and Other Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response) Amendment Act 2020* to allow:

- declarations to be made about a mental health service through an expedited process; and
- mental health patients to be granted leave to comply with public health directions.

The Bill extends the expiry dates of these provisions for a further six months until the end of September 2021 and also aligns the expiry dates for all the amendments made to Health portfolio legislation.

The time has passed for these “emergency” measures. We have had nearly a year living with this virus and although it is mutating, it is no longer new to society. The ultimate decisions should be lying with the QLD Premier, who should source guidance from her subject matter experts. I am not comfortable with the CHO despite her expertise making calls for the whole of our society based purely on the “supposed medical science” without enough weight being put on other factors at play.

I appreciate your time.

Kind Regards,

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