

Expanding Adult Time, Adult Crime and Taking a Strong Stance on Drugs and Anti-Social Behaviour Amendment Bill 2026

Submission No: 028
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Publication: Making the submission and your name public

I support the Queensland Government's policy of toughening drug laws. The former Queensland Government adopted far too permissive an attitude towards illicit drug use, which I believe is likely to have contributed to increasing rates of crime, as well as rising mental health problems including suicide.

I believe that this permissive drug culture arises because we have a lot of people in positions of influence who want to or have previously used drugs. An example pointing to this was reported at the link below, where significant traces of cocaine were found in the toilets of the Queensland Courts.

<https://www.couriermail.com.au/truecrimeaustralia/police-courts-qld/highest-courts-in-qld-illicit-drugs-found-in-states-halls-of-justice/news-story/c8f15cba928eb6e2f1f1c5fc5c90f416>

Given that cocaine is typically a middle and upper-class drug, there is reason to suspect that at least some of the users work in the courts, rather than having cases heard in them. If we have significant numbers of drug users in influential institutions such as the courts, is it any wonder that drug policy has become permissive? The same goes for other significant institutions such as academia, healthcare, media and politics. We need to ensure that these institutions are not compromised by the selfish desires of some people in them.

An example of how our drug laws have been compromised, is through the perpetuation of dishonest narratives such as:

- "Prohibition does not work", in relation to the Prohibition in the US. The fact is that the Prohibition did significantly reduce alcohol consumption, it bounced back in later years but was still less than pre and eventually post Prohibition drinking levels. In relation to cannabis on page 79 of the 2019 National Drug Strategy Household Survey, there was the following quote:

"If cannabis were to be legalised, nearly 4 in 5 (78%) people claimed they would still not use it. However, there was an increase from 2016 to 2019 in the proportion of people who said they would 'try it' (7.4% to 9.5%) and 'use it more often than you do now' (1.8% to 2.9%)."

The clear inference is that legality does impact the number of people who will use a drug and contrary to the pro-drug propaganda, deterrence does work.

- Misuse of the doctrine of harm minimisation. I did clinical practice as a nursing student in the mid 1990s, where harm minimisation was employed to help people who were hopelessly addicted to heroin. I never understood it to mean being permissive towards drug use by middle and upper class people who are making a choice to take drugs and want protection from the legal and in the case of pill testing health, consequences of those choices.

- "But alcohol is legal". Most drug users drink alcohol too, so posing the question about whether they want that banned too shuts down that argument. The legality of alcohol may be hypocritical, but the fact is that it is so culturally embedded in Australia, that it is far harder to change than drug use. It makes no sense to make our drug problem worse, just for the sake of consistency with our alcohol laws.

I also believe that there is an honest error being made by the medical profession in employing harm minimisation. Doctors personally deal with the terrible consequences of drug use in their patients and I believe naturally use those experiences as a point of reference. What they do not see is the person who does not suffer the consequences of drug use, because they have been deterred from doing so.

On a personal level I know that deterrence does work, because as a young person I was offered drugs by associates on occasions, but did not take up the offer due to the potential consequences for my military career aspirations and the health consequences of illicit drugs like ecstasy, which have no quality controls. I drank alcohol though and had drugs not been illegal and quality controlled as pill testing does, I believe that I would have experimented with them.

It is young people like I was, adventurous but capable of being influenced by consequences, that permissive drug laws let down. Given a choice between protecting young people like I was and those who will insist on taking drugs, irrespective of the consequences, I would choose to back those who we can convince to do the right thing.

I note that our multicultural communities are overwhelmingly made up of cultures, which do not have the same permissive attitude to drugs that Anglo Australians do. I am reminded of visiting an Ethnic Communities Council of Australia health forum as an independent political candidate in the 2024 state election, where I offered to represent anti-drug views of those communities, if they felt that they were not being listened to on the matter. The response was a room full of nodding heads and one of the community leaders whose community had children who were getting into trouble with the law, conveyed to me that he felt that permissive drug laws were contributing to this.

The previous government made a big deal of listening to multicultural communities, but when it came to drugs they were pushed aside. In this bill the current government is looking to do better.

This is why I would like to see in addition to the measures in this bill, our drug laws made even tougher for drug users from higher socioeconomic groups. Legislation should be amended to make socio-economic privilege an aggravating factor in drug offences, with those people receiving less warnings, higher penalties and having convictions recorded where it may otherwise not be the case. At the moment people in lower socioeconomic groups know that there are plenty of privileged people using drugs, so the message that they change their habits is undermined by that hypocrisy.

We need to send a message to those privileged people who are supposed to be setting an example of good behaviour in our society, that none of us is so special and talented that we are not prepared to curtail career, travel and personal ambitions, if they are caught taking drugs. I believe this is the key to weeding out the influence of drug users out of our institutions and of destroying the permissive drug culture, that has developed in Queensland.

That is how we will see real progress in reducing the terrible harms that illicit drugs inflict on our society.