

Brynn Mathews

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The Research Director
Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee
Parliament House
Brisbane QLD 4000

Email address: lacsc@parliament.qld.gov.au

Counter-Terrorism and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016

I wish to comment on the Counter-Terrorism and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016 about which I have very serious concerns because of the manner in which it overrides many civil liberties and rights of privacy. In his first reading speech Minister Byrne states “ Privacy concerns or legislation that restricts getting and using crucial information can hamper police efforts in being able to swiftly and effectively manage and resolve critical incidents and public emergencies”. But that won’t be a problem with this proposed Bill, which, if passed into law, would remove many rights of privacy as well as being able to refuse to provide police with requested information. Those who regularly express concern about Sharia law should be very concerned about this proposed legislation, which both the Taliban and Daesh/ISIS could be proud of.

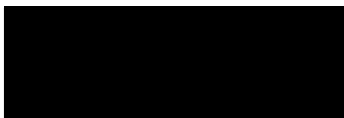
I have particular concerns about the

- The declaration of an emergency situation gives the emergency commander and officers under his control wide-ranging powers to search people and vehicles within, entering or leaving the designated area and seize property, **without any warrants being required.**
- The definition of “emergency situation” on page 54 of the Public Safety Preservation Act 1986 is proposed to be amended by the addition of “*or incident*” so that sub-clause (g) (which follows sub-clauses (a) to (f) that all list very specific situations) now reads:
 - *(g) any other accident or incident;*
 - *that causes or may cause a danger of death, injury or distress to any person, a loss of or damage to any property or pollution of the environment, includes a situation arising from any report in respect of any of the matters referred to in paragraphs (a) to (f) which if proved to be correct would cause or may cause a danger of death, injury or distress to any person, a loss of or damage to any property or pollution of the environment.*

The lack of definition of incident in this Bill is a cause for serious concern in light of the history of laws that have suppressed civil liberties in Queensland, including the unlawful assembly laws of the Joh era and the more recent VLAD laws. A police commander could quite readily use this law to declare a legitimate, and otherwise legal, protest, such as a rally at a construction site, CSG drill site, coal loading wharf, rail line or company board meeting, as an emergency situation on the basis that it “*may cause...distress to any person*”.

In summary, I believe that provisions of this bill are both far-reaching and poorly defined and the government has failed to make an adequate case for these laws that would justify the severe curtailment of civil liberties that they propose.

Yours sincerely



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