

Nathan Laurent



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

Dear Committee,

Regarding a Human Rights Act in Queensland, I would submit that the protection of the following rights by statute would be consistent with Australia's in-principle commitment to international human rights treaties: freedom of speech, association and assembly; freedom of conscience, religion and belief; freedom from cruel and degrading treatment; the right to be free from arbitrary detention; and the right to fair trial.

I would also submit that the concept of human security, as defined by the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security (2009), is worthy of the Committee's consideration. This concept encompasses: economic security (from persistent poverty, unemployment); food security (from hunger, famine); health security (from deadly infectious diseases, unsafe food, malnutrition, lack of access to basic health care); environmental security (from environmental degradation, resource depletion, natural disasters, pollution); personal security (from physical violence, crime, terrorism, domestic violence, child labor); community security (from inter-ethnic, religious and other identity based tensions); political security (from political repression, human rights abuses) (United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security 2009, 6).

In particular, I would submit that the right to a healthy environment, including the right to clean air and water, should be included in a Human Rights Act for Queensland. Basic human rights to life, health, work and education can only be fully realised on the basis of a clean, healthy environment. As Principle 1 of the *Rio Declaration on Environment and Development* states: "Human beings are at the centre of concerns for sustainable development. They are entitled to a healthy and productive life in harmony with nature" (United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, 1992).

Thankyou for considering these points.

Sincerely,
Mr Nathan Laurent, B.Gen. St., B.A. (Hons).

References:

United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, 1992

<http://www.unep.org/documents.multilingual/default.asp?documentid=78&articleid=1163>

United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security 2009

http://www.un.org/humansecurity/sites/www.un.org.humansecurity/files/human_security_in_theory_and_practice_english.pdf