

22 November 2018

Committee Secretary

Legal Affairs and Safety Committee
Parliament House
George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

**Human Rights Bill, 2018 Queensland
SUBMISSION: Bulimba Electorate Youth Advisory Panel**

Dear Committee Members

We, the Bulimba Electorate Youth Advisory Panel – a group of constituents of the Bulimba Electorate, aged between 16 and 25 years old) **support the passing by the Queensland Parliament in reference to the *Human Rights Bill 2018*.**

The bill reflects protecting and promoting the fundamental human rights of those in our communities across Queensland. We, as representatives of the Queensland youth community, acknowledge the importance of this bill and the positive effects it has for our community today, and tomorrow.

We accept and appreciate The Bill's act to consolidate and explicitly reference statutory protections for specified human rights, specifically those recognised under international law, namely the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR).

One of the panel members recognise that "Introducing the Human Rights Bill would benefit all Queenslanders as it will ensure our rights as humans are protected. Similarly, to the ICCPR and the UDHR, having our rights written in legislation that is enforceable will ensure when laws are created, our rights are being thought of to ensure everyone, particularly minorities are not being treated unfairly."

Namely, we appreciate the inclusion to the inclusion to The Bill that references:

- The recognition of cultural rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Further, we applaud the recognition that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples shall not be denied the right to live life freely practicing their culture. We strongly support this bills' reference that acknowledges our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to enjoy, maintain, control, protect and develop their

identity and cultural heritage, including their traditional knowledge, distinctive spiritual practices, observances, beliefs and teachings.

- The protection of children during the criminal process. As representatives of our youth, we congratulate the Parliament's acknowledgement to apply special protections and appropriate treatments on the basis of age. The ruling that any accused child can not be detained with adults and the expedited processing illustrates our government's focus on mental wellbeing and child safety.
- The acknowledgement of the freedom to express and hold opinions through speech, art and writing in a time when the Federal Government continues to de-fund research in the creative industries via lobbying to change the commonwealth payment for publicly supported coursework, this bill offers confidence that while many artists and creators will struggle to find research, their work will be formally protected.
- The creation of a system to address human rights complaints within the QHRC, and one which holds individuals and private entities accountable for the way they treat individuals – in particular, this will provide young people who have uncertain housing or living arrangements the ability to seek meaningful resolution, something that has become crucial as more and more young people are unable to afford to secure their own property and are often subject to the decision-making of private entities.
- The active protection of persons deprived of liberty and security, particularly noting the right to be brought to trial without unreasonable delay. As we seek to correct and re-develop some of our more xenophobic policies around asylum and detention, this right provides those in our community statutory protection, and signals to law enforcement agencies that Queensland expects a higher standard for the way we treat those under our detention, and under our protection.
- The respectful treatment for freedom of thought, conscience, religion and belief, especially during times of societal shifts and innovations. Further, the respectful treatment through legislation regarding the freedom to demonstrate religion or belief in worship, observance, practice and teaching, either individually or as part of a community, in public or in private.

We disagree however, on the premise of shifting power to a commission whose members aren't elected to deal with the lodged complaints, further, we hold judgement, as to how the commission would deal with complaints of freedom of expression and rights to privacy. Additionally, we question the bill's purpose as constituents cannot bring an action to court under this legislation.

Although this bill only holds jurisdiction within Queensland borders, we hope this encourages other states and territories, and the later the Federal Government, to play an active in protecting those who constitute of democratic society.

In a time when the world appears more divided and the future seems uncertain, the motion to protect the fundamental rights of Queenslanders is not only a key step in developing the values and pathos of our state, but a clear statement: regardless of politics, Queenslanders continue to value people, regardless of gender, sexuality, ethnicity, age or socio-economic status.

While we acknowledge The Bill only represents a step toward change, as young people in Queensland, it is encouraging to see the government is actively protecting those in our communities who may not have the means to protect themselves, and continues to galvanise an inclusive, respectful democracy.

Yours Sincerely,

Bulimba Electorate Youth Advisory Panel, 2018

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

Panel Members;

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