

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, Australian Section Inc

Consultative Status with United Nations ECOSOC, UNCTAD and UNESCO
 Consultative Relations with FAO, ILO, and UNICEF

**Australian Section**

1915-2015 WILPF celebrated 100 years of peace and human rights building

**Submission to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee
 on the Human Rights Bill 2018**

TO: Committee Secretary

Email: lacsc@parliament.qld.gov.au

Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee

Parliament House, George Street, Brisbane Qld 4000

**FROM: The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom –Australian Section (WILPF)
 – Queensland Branch**

WILPF's credentials

WILPF-Australian Section, a non-profit, volunteer, incorporated non-government organisation (NGO), is part of a global NGO, with Geneva and New York-based permanent Secretariats. WILPF has Consultative Status with United Nations ECOSOC, UNCTAD and UNESCO, and Consultative Relations with FAO, ILO and UNICEF. An apolitical and secular WILPF joins a variety of consultative alliances and collectives, providing links to government to lobby on relevant issues. We are part of the 2017 Nobel Peace Prize winning team, recognised for our role in achieving the UN Treaty to Ban Nuclear Weapons.

WILPF is committed to disarmament, the peaceful resolution of conflict, and to promoting economic, political & social justice. WILPF aims to end and prevent conflict by peaceful means, ensure that women are represented at all levels in the peace-building and reconciliation processes, and to defend the human rights of all people, especially women. The International Secretariat works with 38 National Sections, for conflict resolution, and to strengthen human rights and freedoms at every level, from grassroots to the highest UN decision-making bodies.

Comment on the Queensland Human Rights Bill 2018

WILPF, a member of the Human Rights Act for Queensland Campaign, commends the Queensland Government on the introduction of the Bill to the Legislative Assembly and the statement of the Attorney General, that this is the "next step" in advancing the Queensland Community to respect, protect and promote human rights. WILPF commits to continuing the campaign, in alignment with the Legislature, Judiciary and Executive, to changing the culture of the Public Sector and Queensland Community, to ensure we interact with balanced rights and responsibilities in a principled way, that is compatible with human rights obligations.

It is especially commendable and progressive, that the Bill provides for conciliation and remedy for human rights violations, through the Queensland Human Rights Commission – with its new functions as an accessible and independent dispute resolution and educative body. WILPF recognises that there are general limitations on implementation of legislation, and that all actions in the context of the exercise of human rights must be reasonable, justified and proportionate.

Community initiative and consultation has been a feature of achieving this Human Rights Bill. We consider it desirable that this continues by including the Queensland Community and the many relevant NGOs, in the dialogue of the Legislature, Judiciary and Executive, via the Queensland Human Rights Commission, with its review and educational functions. Such inclusion in a structured way requires funding and we ask the Executive to consider this, in augmenting the \$2.3m over 4 years, currently envisaged.



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Community input and consultation, especially in the areas of the periods for review, amendment of other legislation in the light of compatibility with human rights, over-ride declarations and interpretive provisions of the Bill, is desirable and essential to change culture.

We note Clause 48 in referencing international treaties and covenants, UN entities, courts and tribunals, and the laws and interpretations of other national and state jurisdictions in interpreting a Human Rights Act. We consider it a strengthening factor for more specific inclusion and naming of these, to be included in the Bill, given the appalling record of Australia in bringing into national law, the treaties to which it is a signatory.

Yours in peace

Maree Klemm
Director – WILPF Australian Section



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