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07/10/2019

Submission on the Summary Offences and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2019

Dear committee members,

I would like to take this opportunity to provide my input in relation to the Summary Offences and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2019.

I am opposed to these new amendments. There is no publicly available evidence to justify this bill. Politicians, police and the media have reported that lock on devices are dangerous to police and emergency personnel however no evidence is available that this is the case. Thus far, these devices have been used only to make it difficult to remove a person and assist them in their actions that utilise civil disobedience.

Particularly considering the lack of evidence for dangerous use of these items or inherent danger within the items, these laws are unreasonable and disturbing. They are eroding our democratic freedoms. Protests and civil disobedience in Queensland especially has contributed to democracy in this state and improving social and environmental outcomes and workers' rights. Undermining or limiting people's ability to protest is very concerning and not something I would like to see in Australia. The Peaceful Assembly Act ensures the right to protest. Lock on devices are part of that right to protest and we want to allow Australians to continue to exercise that right. Considering proportionality, asking for a jail sentence for someone engaging in civil disobedience is excessive.

Please consider my views as an Australian citizen who values our democratic freedoms and wants to ensure a safe future for future generations including freedom to protest or take peaceful action against injustices.

Kind regards,

Anna Sri