

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee](#)  
**Subject:** Submission on the Summary Offences and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2019  
**Date:** Tuesday, 8 October 2019 10:48:25 AM

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Submission on the Summary Offences and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2019

8/10/2019

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Dear Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the Summary Offences and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2019. I need you to record my strong objection to these proposed new laws. The reasons are:

1. They are without any basis in evidence - justification for this Bill is apparently based on fabricated advice that protesters were “booby-trapping” devices to harm themselves or others. To date, there has been no evidence produced in support of these claims.
2. They are disproportionate, under the guise of public safety, seeking to prioritise business interests over the democratic rights of Australians to protest peaceably
3. They are excessive - Police already have broad stop and search powers in Queensland, under the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000 which they use to conduct searches on people suspected of being involved in activism. There appear to be no checks to prevent these new powers being applied in arbitrary and discriminatory ways. This Bill will grant Police increased authority to issue fines for activities related to protesting. Vesting police with this discretion about whether certain protesting activities will constitute an offence essentially authorises police to be the arbiters of what constitutes a legitimate protest activity

The right to protest about activities which we know will worsen the dire climate change situation – especially for Queensland experiencing horrific drought and bushfires – is a public duty. This is ordinary people wanting to urging governments to act on this. Targeting members of the public who participate in protest action by banning an effective method of peaceful protest through legislation is unjustifiably inconsistent with our right to freedom of expression. This right is protected by section 7 of the Human Rights Act (Qld) and articles 19 and 20 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). Protesting is a necessary mechanism for civic engagement and pressuring change when governments are no longer listening to their constituents.

Civil disobedience, including the actions this Bill targets, is an important form of protest. Most activists undertake such actions not to cause harm, but to raise public and government awareness, and urge governments to act now to lessen the impact of climate change.

To allow legislation that actively undermines the efficacy of protest activity is a counter to the basic precepts of democracy. I urge the committee to reject this Bill.

Kind Regards,

Dr Judith A Bourne