



PeakCare

Queensland Inc.

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

29 January 2016

Dear Sir / Madam

Re: Youth Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015

Please accept this late submission in support of the key objectives of the Youth Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015.

PeakCare Qld Inc. (PeakCare) is a peak body for child and family services in Queensland. Across Queensland, PeakCare has 61 members, which are a mix of small, medium and large, local and statewide, mainstream and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander non-government organisations that provide family support, child protection, and out-of-home care services (e.g. foster and kinship care, residential care) to children and young people who are at risk of entry to or in the statutory child protection system and their families. In addition, PeakCare's membership includes a network of 23 individual members and other entities supportive of PeakCare's policy platform about the safety and wellbeing of children and young people, and the support of their families. As the Committee would be aware, there is an overlap of children and young people at risk of or in the youth justice system with children and young people in the child protection system.

PeakCare supports the proposed amendments to the Youth Justice Act 1992 and the Penalties and Sentences Act 1992, and agree that these amendments would substantively restore provisions that existed prior to amendments made by the Youth Justice (Boot Camp Orders) Amendment Act 2013 and the Youth Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2014.

PeakCare agrees that repealing the 2014 reforms reflects international evidence that increasing the severity of punishment is ineffective in reducing recidivism, particularly by children and young people. PeakCare strongly supports diversion and addressing the causes of offending taking priority over punitive and inappropriate punishment, and that detention should be the option of last resort in sentencing. PeakCare also supports other objectives in the Bill around removing breaches of bail as an offence for children, removing boot camp orders as a sentencing option, prohibiting the publication of identifying information about a child dealt with under the Youth Justice Act 1992, making childhood findings of guilt inadmissible in court when sentencing those children for adult offences, and reinstating the Childrens Court of Queensland's sentence review jurisdiction and expanding the jurisdiction to include Magistrate's decisions in relation to breaches of community based orders.

If you require further information, please contact me [REDACTED]
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Again, please accept my apologies for this late submission. I urge the Committee to take PeakCare's views into consideration.

Yours sincerely

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Lindsay Wegener (Mr)
Executive Director
PeakCare Queensland Inc.

