

## Planning (Social Impact and Community Benefit) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025

**Submission No:** 537

**Submitted by:** [REDACTED]

**Publication:** Making the submission public but withholding your name

**Attachments:** No attachment

### Submitter Comments:

Dear Sir/Madam Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to the Queensland Parliament's Inquiry into the Planning (Social Impact and Community Benefit) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025. As a parent of two primary aged children, I am committed to ensuring that they and future generations inherit a clean, healthy and sustainable environment, where they and other children in urban areas, are able to experience nature firsthand and not through a textbook. I am also committed to ensuring that they grow up with a respect for the social justice, rule of law and our democratic processes. The amendments to Olympic developments under the POLA Bill undermine these principles. The climate crisis poses an existential threat to current and future generations of children. Australian children are already experiencing the devastating impacts of climate change, which are being felt most acutely by the most disadvantaged in our communities. These impacts will grow exponentially into the future if action is not taken now. Children in urban areas have fewer safe, green spaces to play, and access nature. In 2020, the United Nations Human Rights Council (HRC) adopted a resolution "realising the rights of the child through a healthy environment", and called on States to ensure that the best interests of children are central in environmental decision making and to consider recognising the right to a healthy environment in national law. A year later, the HRC recognised that the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment is a human right. And, in 2022 the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution (voted for by Australia and 160 other nations) that explicitly recognises the human right to a healthy environment and that environmental damage is felt acutely by children. The United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child's General Comment No. 26 goes further and specifies that States are responsible not only for protecting children's rights from immediate harm, but also for foreseeable violations of their rights in the future due to States' acts — or failure to act — today. Furthermore, it underlines that States can be held accountable not only for environmental harm occurring within their borders, but also for the harmful impacts of environmental damage and climate change beyond their borders. Particular attention is to be paid to disproportionate harm faced by children in disadvantaged situations. Our planning and approval frameworks recognise the need to ensure that significant development decisions are not made without safeguards to protect our environment, heritage and civil rights. The recent decision of the Queensland Government to remove the need to comply with relevant planning, environmental, cultural and heritage protection laws for Olympic developments contravenes basic principles of sustainable development, intergenerational equality and children's right to a safe, healthy and sustainable environment, and for their voice to be heard on matters that affect them and their future. GIICA's own 100 Day Review report noted that post-review priorities included: "engaging key stakeholders to progress planning and ensure alignment with broader city and community objectives" (GIICA, 2025, p55). I object to the State Government's proposed amendments to the existing Olympic Act under the POLA Bill introduced on 1 May 2025 to the Queensland Parliament, and offer recommendations to ensure that the Brisbane 2032 Olympics lives up to the Host city's and also Legacy Strategy's commitments to protect the environment and leave future Queenslanders with a positive environmental legacy. I respectfully ask that the Committee's report to Parliament recommend that:

1. The principles of ecologically sustainable development, intergenerational equity and the right of children to a healthy environment, and a voice in matters that concern them, are upheld in regard to the consideration of proposed developments.
2. Queensland's laws that apply to proposed new developments (including for the Olympics and beyond):
  - a. Enshrine the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment for children and future generations, in line with Australia's commitments under its international

commitment, including the United Nation's Convention on the Rights of the Child; b. Uphold the principles of intergenerational equity to specifically include the climate consequences of actions, legislating strong and enforceable standards, increasing public participation through increased options to challenge decisions; and c. Uphold Australia's commitments to respect the rights of Queensland's First Nations and Traditional Owners, under the and the United Nation's Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. d. Protect public greenspaces, halt the degradation of protected environmental and heritage-listed places, including Victoria Park/Barrambin; e. Mandate comprehensive Social Impact Assessments (SIAs) and Cost-benefit Analysis (BCA): Ensure that all significant developments undergo thorough SIAs, and CBA that considers gendered-impacts, vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, including children and youths, persons with a disability, families from lower-economic and multicultural backgrounds that will be directly and indirectly affected by the development. f. Mandate community consultation that deliberately seeks the views of women, children, vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, persons with a disability, First Nations groups and Traditional Owners, affected by proposed developments; and 3. Establish an independent community oversight body that includes young people, with enforceable accountabilities to integrate community concerns and ideas into Games planning, construction and operation of the Olympic venues and legacy developments. Thank you