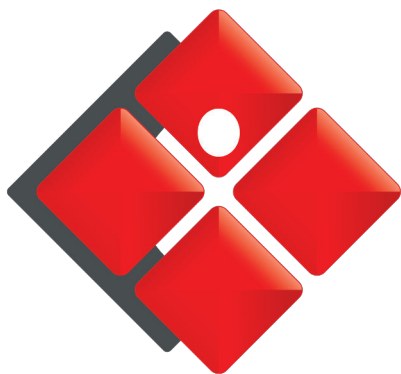


Submission to the
Legal Affairs and Safety Committee

**Criminal Code (Serious
Vilification and Hate Crimes) and
Other Legislation Amendment
Bill 2023**

2 May 2023



PeakCare
Queensland Inc.

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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INTRODUCTION

PeakCare Queensland Incorporated (PeakCare) welcomes the opportunity to provide information in response to the Queensland Parliament's Legal Affairs and Safety Committee's call for submissions to support detailed consideration of the Criminal Code (Serious Vilification and Hate Crimes) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023.

ABOUT PEAKCARE

PeakCare is a not-for-profit peak body for child and family services in Queensland, providing an independent and impartial voice representing and promoting matters of interest to the non-government sector.

Across Queensland, PeakCare has approximately 50 member organisations which include small, medium and large, local, state-wide and national non-government organisations which provide prevention and early intervention, generic, targeted, and intensive family support to children, young people, adults and families. Member organisations also provide child protection services, foster care, kinship care and residential care services for children and young people and their families who are at risk of entry to, or who are in the statutory child protection system.

A network of registered supporters also subscribe to PeakCare. Supporters include individuals with an interest in child protection and related services, and who are supportive of PeakCare's policy platform around the rights and entitlements of children, young people and their families to safety, wellbeing and equitable access to life opportunities.

ABOUT PEAKCARE'S SUBMISSION

Children, young people and families who are supported by Queensland's child and family services sector are particularly vulnerable to experiencing serious vilification and becoming the victims of hate crimes. Given PeakCare's firm position that there is no place for these kinds of behaviours and criminal acts in our community, we have a strong interest in ensuring any legislative reform is best positioned to deliver appropriate, proportionate, effective and timely responses that hold perpetrators to account and keep our communities safe from hatred, prejudice and bigotry.

PEAKCARE'S SUBMISSION

PeakCare is supportive of the amendments proposed in the Bill which we believe will be effective in helping to address the devastating impacts of hatred, prejudice and bigotry. We believe the proposed amendments will help better protect our communities, in particular our valued multicultural and LGBTIQ+ communities, and create a positive platform for supporting broader social change.

PeakCare is also satisfied with the proposed approach for the identification of 'prohibited symbols' and considers the proposed 'reasonable excuse' provisions are appropriate and balanced.

In considering the Statement of Compatibility, PeakCare supports the opinion of the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence that the limits on human rights introduced by the bill is reasonable and demonstrably justifiable.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

While PeakCare commends the Queensland Government on the proposed Bill, we acknowledge that these new laws alone will not be enough to eliminate hatred, racism, bigotry and prejudice in our communities. It is important that these laws are seen as just one part of a broader strategic approach for creating positive and inclusive social change and that work continues to help shift the social attitudes and behaviours that foster prejudice. We agree that offending motivated by prejudice is unacceptable and should not be tolerated. We believe this Bill is a positive step forward in reinforcing this view and one that will help create a safer and more inclusive Queensland for everyone.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission on aspects of the Criminal Code (Serious Vilification and Hate Crimes) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023.

Yours sincerely,



Thomas Allsop
Executive Director
PeakCare Queensland Incorporated
(Pronouns: he/him)