

PARLIAMENTARY JOINT COMMITTEE ON HUMAN RIGHTS
CHAIR'S TABLING STATEMENT

Tuesday, 27 November 2018

I rise to speak to the tabling of the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights' *Human Rights Scrutiny Report 12 of 2018*.

Of the new bills examined in Chapter 1 of this report, 15 have been assessed as not raising human rights concerns as they promote, permissibly limit, or do not engage, human rights. The committee has also requested further information in relation to the human rights compatibility of 2 bills, and has considered 3 bills on an 'advice only' basis. Chapter 2 of the report contains the committee's concluded examination of a number of pieces of legislation.

Of the bills assessed as not raising human rights concerns, I would like to highlight the statement of compatibility accompanying the Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals Legislation Amendment (Streamlining Regulation) Bill 2018. This bill amends a number of acts relating to the regulation of agricultural and veterinary chemical products in a manner that engages and limits a number of human rights, including the right to privacy, freedom of expression and criminal process rights. The statement of compatibility comprehensively sets out each of the rights that were engaged and limited by the measures in the bill, which allowed for an assessment that the measures, in context, were permissible limitations on human rights. The statement of compatibility accompanying this bill is an example of how, when human rights issues are fully addressed in the

statement, the committee is able to conclude its analysis without needing to seek further information from legislation proponents.

In this regard, statements of compatibility are the primary document that sets out the legislation proponent's assessment of the human rights compatibility of legislation, and are a key starting point for the committee's technical examination of the human rights compatibility of legislation. The committee has, in recent months, been undertaking a project to improve statements of compatibility including by engaging with legislation proponents and providing training. The aim is to improve the quality of statements of compatibility by explaining the committee's expectations, underpinned by the legal requirements, as to the content of the statements of compatibility and information as to how the statement of compatibility could be improved.

I encourage my fellow Members and others to examine the committee's latest scrutiny report to better inform their consideration of proposed legislation.

With these comments, I commend the committee's *Report 12 of 2018* to the Chamber.