



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**PROOF**

**COMMITTEES**

**Human Rights Joint Committee**

**Report**

**SPEECH**

**Wednesday, 26 June 2024**

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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## SPEECH

<b>Date</b> Wednesday, 26 June 2024	<b>Source</b> House
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<b>Questioner</b>	<b>Responder</b>
<b>Speaker</b> Burns, Josh MP	<b>Question No.</b>

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**Mr BURNS** ( Macnamara ) ( 16:53 ): On behalf of the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights, I present the committee's report, incorporating a dissenting report, entitled *Human rights scrutiny report No. 5 of 2024*.

Report made a parliamentary paper in accordance with standing order 39(e).

**Mr BURNS:** by leave—I'm pleased to table the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights's fifth scrutiny report of 2024. In this report the committee has considered 23 new bills and 45 new legislative instruments, substantively commented on one new bill and concluded its examination of one bill.

In particular, the committee has considered the Defence Amendment (Parliamentary Joint Committee on Defence) Bill 2024, which seeks to establish a parliamentary joint committee on defence. The bill would introduce two secrecy offences prohibiting the disclosure of information and documents provided to this new committee in confidence. The committee considers that, while prohibiting the disclosure of information to the extent that it contains personal information would promote the right to privacy, restricting the disclosure of such information would also limit the right to freedom of expression. The committee is seeking further information from the Minister for Defence to access the compatibility of this measure with the right to freedom of expression, particularly as to why these offences do not contain additional safeguards as recommended by the recent review of secrecy provisions by the Attorney-General's Department.

The committee has also concluded its examination of the National Disability Insurance Scheme Amendment (Getting the NDIS Back on Track No. 1) Bill 2024, which seeks to make various amendments to the NDIS Act. The committee considers that the NDIS scheme promotes multiple human rights and that seeking to improve the scheme is an important objective, particularly having regard to the recommendations of the recent NDIS review. However, the committee is concerned, depending on how it is applied in practice, that this bill could allow for limits on human rights, particularly the rights of persons with disability. In relation to some measures the committee considers that there remains a risk that the proposed limitation of rights may not be proportionate in all circumstances, and has made some recommendations that may assist with proportionality. In relation to other measures, following the provision of further information by the Minister for the National Disability Insurance Scheme the committee considers that its concerns have been addressed. We thank the minister for his communications and advice to the committee.

Finally, this report sets out the response from the Minister for Indigenous Australians in relation to the Social Security (Remote Engagement Program Payment) Determination 2023, for which the committee had previously concluded its examination. The committee welcomes the minister's advice that she has asked the National Indigenous Australians Agency to consider the committee's findings regarding the application of human rights when designing a new remote jobs and economic development program and a new employment service for remote Australia.

I encourage all members to consider the committee's report closely. I thank the deputy chair and the hardworking secretariat for their work, and I commend the committee's *Human rights scrutiny report: Report 5 of 2024* to the House.