



Premier of Queensland

For reply please quote: LJ/SF – TF/10/14157 – DOC/10/85816

23 JUL 2010

Senator Trish Crossin
Chair
Standing Committee on Legal and
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Dear Senator Crossin

Thank you for your email of 8 June 2010 concerning the Inquiry into the Human Rights (Parliamentary Scrutiny) Bill 2010 and the Human Rights (Parliamentary Scrutiny) (Consequential Provisions) Bill 2010 (the Bills).

Firstly, thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Bills. The Queensland Government welcomes the establishment of Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights as an important measure in ensuring the further protection and promotion of human rights in Australia.

The committee may be interested to note current arrangements in Queensland which are designed to ensure proper Parliamentary scrutiny of human rights and related issues as part of the legislative process. Queensland has in place a similar committee, the Scrutiny of Legislation Committee, which is responsible for considering the application of 'fundamental legislative principles' to particular Bills and subordinate legislation, as well as the lawfulness of particular subordinate legislation. The 'fundamental legislative principles' contained in the *Legislative Standards Act 1992* (Queensland) require new legislation to have 'sufficient regard to' both the rights and liberties of individuals and the institution of Parliament.

Further, on 25 February 2010, my Government established the Review of the Parliamentary Committee System Committee as a select committee to conduct an inquiry and report on how the Parliamentary oversight of legislation in Queensland could be enhanced, and how the existing Parliamentary Committee system could be strengthened to enhance accountability. This is an important step in ensuring that legislative proposals in Queensland, including those which may raise human rights issues, are effectively evaluated and examined by the legislature. The committee will report to the Legislative Assembly by the end of 2010.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Bills.

Yours sincerely

ANNA BLIGH MP
PREMIER OF QUEENSLAND