



Hon John-Paul Langbroek MP
Member for Surfers Paradise



Minister for Education, Training
and Employment

1 JUN 2012

Senator the Honourable Ursula Stephens
Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs,
Defence and Trade
Department of the Senate
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600



Dear Senator Stephens

As the Queensland Minister for Education, Training and Employment I am responsible for Queensland Government policy on higher education and in particular universities.

I write in support for the Universities Australia submission to the Committee on the matter of the Defence Trade Controls Bill 2011. While I support the intent of the legislation to update Australia's existing system of export controls to cover 'intangible' transfers of technology and services related to items listed on the Defence and Strategic Goods List; I am concerned the proposed legislation will have profound impacts on the reputation and standing of higher education in Queensland.

I acknowledge that the passing of this Bill is an important step towards the implementation of the Australia-United States Defence Trade Co-operation Treaty. The Treaty foreshadows a new regime for the exchange of certain sensitive defence information and material between trusted member organisations without the need for export approvals and permits on a case by case basis, which is a welcomed development.

However I am concerned the Bill in its present form will greatly affect Queensland universities and their ability to attract world class post-doctoral research students who provide an extremely valuable contribution to the core functions of universities and the community. Further, the extensive identification of activities and people that would be required by the legislation will impose a heavy administrative burden on universities, divert precious research resources, and could stymie collaborative research projects.

The Queensland Government has invested over \$1.12 billion in research infrastructure, \$3.28 billion in collaborative research projects, and \$380 million in research talent since the late 1990s. It has also made significant investments in university infrastructure throughout the State. The Bill in its current form, specifically clause 10(1) and 10(2), will compromise research initiatives that could either be supported by the Queensland Government or undertaken at Queensland universities.

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I urge the Committee to support the recommendation by Universities Australia to amend the Bill in alignment with section 8 of the *Export Control Act 2002 (UK)*.

Should your officers wish to discuss this matter further, I invite them to contact Mr Greg Thurlow, Executive Director, Office of Higher Education by email at greg.thurlow@deta.qld.gov.au or on telephone (07) 3234 1955.

Yours sincerely

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Minister for Education, Training and Employment

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cc: The Honourable Senator Chris Evans, Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills, Science and Research