

**SUBMISSION TO THE SENATE LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE REGARDING THE  
INQUIRY INTO THE NORTHERN TERRITORY NATIONAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE**

Dear Senators

Please register my concerns about of the the Northern Territory National Emergency Response legislation now before you and the legislative process engaged in this.

The way the legislation is being rushed through Parliament is neither fair nor democratic process. This complex legislation will have a huge impact on the Northern Territory Aboriginal people and more time allowed for and informed debate for all of us. Consultation with the communities has been inadequate and one-sided. As demonstrated by the inadequate time between release of the legislation and today's enquiry.

Several of the changes to the 5 Acts are unnecessary in achieving the stated goal of creating safe environments for Aboriginal children and could in fact make matters worse.

My concerns include:

**Land Tenure**

There is no evidence of any direct link between the issue of land tenure and child abuse and dysfunction in Aboriginal communities in the Northern Territory. Except that is for the continued observation that connection to Land is critical to cultural health and well-being.

**The Racial Discrimination Act**

To supercede the Racial Discrimination Act is a dangerous and draconian measure which will further marginalize and alienate Aboriginal communities.

**Welfare payment reform**

Quarantining welfare payments to all members of a specific racial group within a specific geographical area without their consent is blatant discrimination and I ask that you oppose it.

With respect I implore you to oppose discriminatory elements in the Emergency Response plan and present amendments to support just reform – and the development of healthy communities.

Yours faithfully

Ms Rho Sandberg