



Queensland Advocacy Incorporated

Our mission is to promote, protect and defend, through advocacy, the fundamental needs, rights and lives of the most vulnerable people with disability in Queensland.

Systems and Individual Advocacy for vulnerable People with Disability

TO THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL, THE HON. CHRISTIAN PORTER MP

#MakeItSafeToSpeak

QAI stands with Disabled People's Organisations Australia (DPOA) and urges the government to pass legislation to protect the confidentiality of submissions made to the Disability Royal Commission.

The Disability Royal Commission has now run for over a year without adequate legislation in place to protect the confidentiality of submissions beyond the life of the Royal Commission.

Many people with disability, who want to come forward to the Royal Commission with information regarding distressing incidents of violence, abuse, neglect and/or exploitation, including incidents that may be happening in the present, need certainty that information given in confidence remains confidential after the Royal Commission has concluded.

People with disability may need to give information and evidence in confidence to protect themselves from repercussions from the system they are dependent upon for supports. People in these situations may not be able to access support to participate in a private hearing, or may choose not to, preferring to give information in confidential submission form only.

If we are not able to provide information to the Disability Royal Commission in complete confidence, there is a risk that the most severe cases of systemic abuse and neglect will not be exposed. It is vital to the success of the Royal Commission that the appropriate changes to the legislation are made as soon as possible.

QAI calls upon the Attorney-General to prioritise introducing legislation into the Federal Parliament to extend the same privacy protections that were provided to people making submissions to the Child Sexual Abuse Royal Commission.

Further, QAI calls upon *all* members of Federal Parliament to support the calls for a bill to amend the Royal Commission Act to protect the confidentiality of peoples' submissions beyond the life of the Royal Commission and to pass such legislation as a matter of urgency.

Yours Faithfully,

Michelle O'Flynn (Director)

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QAI endorses the objectives, and promotes the principles, of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Patron: His Excellency The Honorable Paul de Jersey AC