

QUEENSLAND COUNCIL FOR CIVIL LIBERTIES

Protecting Queenslanders' individual rights and liberties since 1967

Watching Them While They're Watching You

MEDIA RELEASE

MEDIA RELEASE

A Human Rights Act for Queensland – AT LAST!

“Yesterday the Queensland Parliament passed the Human Rights Act. The LNP showed that it had learned nothing from the last 50 years” said QCCL President Michael Cope.

The Act contains a set of fundamental rights that nobody could reasonably object to the right to life, freedom of speech, freedom from torture, privacy, the right to private property and equality before the law.

We live in a State with no Upper House. We need to create numerous devices to protect our liberties from rampant governments of all persuasions.

The Act will go further than those in other States to include a right to education and health and a right to make a complaint to the Human Rights Commission, where the Commission will try to settle the dispute

“Unfortunately” says Mr. Cope “the opposition opposed the Bill on 2 contradictory grounds”

The first is that the Act will make no difference.

“Like all human rights instruments the Act will fill the gaps in the existing framework and provide a hook on which Queenslanders who feel their rights have been trampled will be able to hang their complaints” said Mr Cope.

The second argument by the opposition is that it will destroy the separation of powers.

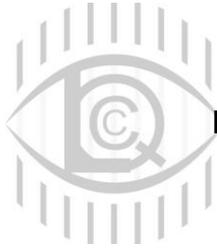
Mr Cope says, “This is a complete furphy. A decision by a court that a law is inconsistent with the Act does not change the law. The law remains the same unless the Parliament changes the law”

“Opponents of a Human Rights Act say we should rely on them to protect our rights. Apparently we can't rely on them to defend us from the decisions of Judges,” said Mr Cope

A Human Rights Act is not a panacea, ultimately only an active citizenry can protect our rights and liberties. However, the Act will provide a new tool that citizens of this State can use to protect themselves.

For example in Victoria it has been used successfully to secure privacy for people living in old age homes.

“The QCCL congratulates the government on this bold reform which will bring benefits to all Queenslanders” says Mr. Cope



QUEENSLAND COUNCIL FOR CIVIL LIBERTIES

Protecting Queenslanders' individual rights and liberties since 1967

Watching Them While They're Watching You

"By contrast the LNP has failed to grasp this opportunity to clearly demonstrate that it has rejected the authoritarianism of Joh and Campbell Newman," said Mr Cope

For further information contact Michael Cope President QCCL on 07 3223 5939 during office hours and at all times on 0432 847 154

28 February 2019

ENDS