

8 October 2020

The Hon. Jill Hennessy
Attorney-General
Level 26, 121 Exhibition St
Melbourne VIC 3000

By email only to: jill.hennessy@parliament.vic.gov.au

Dear Attorney,

Proposed changes - COVID-19 Omnibus (Emergency Measures) and Other Acts Amendment Bill 2020

We thank you for the opportunity to receive a briefing from your office yesterday regarding further proposed amendments to the COVID-19 Omnibus (Emergency Measures) and Other Acts Amendment Bill 2020 (**'Omnibus Bill'**).

As you are aware, we are supportive of the Omnibus Bill, which amends the *COVID-19 Omnibus (Emergency Measures) Act 2020* (**'Omnibus Act'**) and other Acts to extend the operation of certain temporary modifications to the laws in Victoria enacted for the purpose of responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, and to provide for new temporary modifications to the laws of Victoria for the purpose of responding to, and relating to, the COVID-19 pandemic.

We understand that further amendments to the Omnibus Bill have been proposed, to be managed through the House.

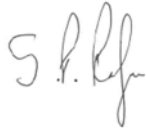
We confirm that we are supportive of the proposal to remove the extended powers to detain in the Omnibus Bill in its entirety and understand that the status quo will remain in force under the current legislation.

We are also supportive of the proposed amendments to clarify the classes of persons under 'authorised officer', acknowledging that the Government is seeking to ensure specificity to include persons in which the Secretary may appoint as appropriate based on their skills, attributes, experience or otherwise or in a prescribed class of person, such as Victoria Police or WorkSafe Inspectors. We commend the Government's aim of ensuring transparency in setting out the limits on powers each class of persons can exercise, for instance flexibility to ensure contact tracing powers are extended to those with appropriate skills for vulnerable or disadvantaged people, those with mental illness, disability, homelessness, and for Torres Strait Islander or Aboriginal individuals and culturally or linguistically diverse communities.

We thank you again for your collaborative approach, particularly by providing us with a briefing, and commend you for taking swift action to safeguard the intent of the legislation, in order to ultimately ensure the safety of the community.

As always, please feel free to contact us if you wish to discuss these matters further.

Yours sincerely



Sam Pandya
President



Adam Awty
Chief Executive