

To: jsct@aph.gov.au

Request for a Parliamentary Inquiry into the World Health Organization's Amendments to the International Health Regulations

As a concerned Australian, I am writing to respectfully request your attention and consideration regarding an issue of paramount importance— the recent and proposed changes to the International Health Regulations as put forth by various member states of the World Health Organization (WHO).

The changes will impact Australia's ability to respond to any future international health crises and both threaten to change the nature of the relationship between Australia and the WHO as well as undermine Australia's health and parliamentary authority.

As per the WHO's own website, "The IHR are an instrument of international law that is legally-binding on 196 countries, including the 194 WHO Member States". The proposed amendments include that:

- the words non-binding be deleted (article 1) and
- their decision will be final over Australia (article 43)

It is also proposed that Australia introduce domestic legislation to implement the WHO's mandates (article 4).

The deadline to reject the amendments (adopted in May 2022) to the International Health Regulations is fast approaching; this being by 1 December 2023.

The deadline for input into a further 307 proposed changes to International Health Regulations that are currently under negotiation is mid-January 2024 and, while the proposed changes are known and of grave concern, the WHO negotiations on those changes are being held to a large extent in secret and without public input.

*I am sure you would be aware that given these are only amendments to an existing agreement they hence **do not** require **any** approval by our Government.*

As such a parliamentary inquiry to comprehensively and transparently evaluate these proposed changes, and seek input from experts, stakeholders,

and everyday Australians is of utmost importance to ensure that Australians have the opportunity to participate in shaping the policies that impact Australian lives, especially those which emanate from unelected organisations such as the WHO, whose funding model leaves it open to significant potential conflicts of interests.

Such an inquiry would provide a platform for thorough examination, allowing diverse perspectives to be heard and ensuring transparency and accountability in the decision-making process.

A transparent and comprehensive Parliamentary Inquiry will facilitate this. It will ensure that the responsibility for the health and well-being of Australians remains with those who have been elected by Australians who understand our unique needs.

I kindly request that the Parliamentary Joint Standing Committee on Treaties initiate a parliamentary inquiry into the World Health Organization's recent and proposed International Health Regulation changes. By doing so, you would demonstrate a commitment to democratic values and provide an avenue for meaningful public input.

Yours faithfully,

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[Your Name]

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[Suburb, Postcode]