

To Whom It May Concern,

SUBMISSION ON THE WORKPLACES (PROTECTION FROM PROTESTORS) AMENDMENT BILL 2021

I write to you on behalf of the members of the Health and Community Services Union (HACSU), which is the largest trade union in Tasmania, with almost 9,000 financial members working in the health and community services sector across Tasmania. Our members work in aged care, disability services, community health, mental health, diagnostic services, community services, private practices, ambulance, and hospitals. Our members are health professionals, paramedics, scientists, disability support workers, aged care workers, nurses, technicians, dentists, allied health professionals, clerical and administrative staff, managers and support staff including orderlies, food services and cleaning staff.

I write to express our concerns about the Workplaces (Protection from Protestors) Amendment Bill 2021 as we believe it fails to provide the required range of protection for our members to adequately prosecute their opposition to industrial and managerial practices adopted by employers.

I note the previous submission made by Unions Tasmania with respect to the Workplaces (Protection from Protestors) Amendment Bill 2019 and declare our support for that submission and the Submission with respect to this new Bill.

We do not see that the 2021 Bill substantially resolves any matters raised as concerns by Unions Tasmania in its previous 2019 submission. To that end, it is conceivable that any HACSU members, for example, protesting in relation to State Government budget cuts, rallying for better hospitals funding, an extension of Medicare to cover dental and ambulance funding, for better health services to women and children could be charged with an offence under this Bill.

The Bill does not protect the above types of protest in relation to union activity. This is a very serious and undue limitation on the capacity of workers to advocate for their rights and one which requires urgent reform, removing said nature of limitations. This has not at all been addressed in this Bill.

It is collective action on issues, including taking protest action which often lead to positive community change. Our members believe in collective action, they believe that often, when governments make decisions which hurt them or those whom they care, that reverting to such action is necessary.

A civil society allows for this action to be taken without fear of ideological persecution. The proposed Bill does nothing to satisfy our members that they will be protected from it..

Yours sincerely



Tim Jacobson

State Secretary

23/9/21