



ABN 91323005375

## ***Catholic Women's League Australia Inc***

Member Organisation of the World Union of Catholic Women's Organisations (WUCWO)  
NGO Consultant (roster) status with the Economics and  
Social Council of the United Nations

*"Be joyful in hope, patient in trouble, and  
persistent in prayer."* Romans 12:12.

Catholic Women's League of Australia  
www.cwla.com.au

15 December 2023

The COVID-19 Response Inquiry Panel  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT  
COVID-19Inquiry@pmc.gov.au

### **Submission to the Commonwealth Government COVID-19 Response Inquiry**

We welcome the Inquiry's review of the Commonwealth Government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

#### Legal considerations

The mandating of COVID-19 vaccines was in breach of Section 51(xxiiiia) of the Constitution of Australia<sup>1</sup>. Wong v Commonwealth (2009) supports this point; "Mandatory jabs and bans on the unvaccinated? Try getting that past the High Court"<sup>2</sup>:

#### Future responses

Future responses to a pandemic must take into account the following:

##### ***Excess deaths***

Australia now has an unusually high rate of excess deaths, yet the Senate voted to not look into the reasons for this.<sup>3</sup> A future response to a pandemic cannot be effective unless current excess deaths are investigated. Medical professionals are taking interest in this issue.<sup>4</sup>

##### ***Masks***

The report "Do physical measures such as hand-washing or wearing masks stop or slow down the spread of respiratory viruses?"<sup>5</sup> (██████████ 30 January 2023) states that the wearing of masks and N95/P2 respirators may make little to no difference in how many people caught a flu-like illness/COVID-like illness.

##### ***Lockdowns***

Signatories to the Great Barrington Declaration<sup>6</sup> stated<sup>7</sup>:

*Current lockdown policies are producing devastating effects on short and long-term public health. The results (to name a few) include lower childhood vaccination rates, worsening cardiovascular disease outcomes, fewer cancer screenings and deteriorating mental health – leading to greater excess mortality in years to come, with the working class and younger*

*members of society carrying the heaviest burden. Keeping students out of school is a grave injustice.*

Furthermore, the closure of Catholic churches (among other religious places of worship) was also a grave injustice against human rights.<sup>8</sup>

## Recommendation

Commonwealth Government COVID-19 Response Inquiry should include the actions taken unilaterally by state and territory governments. The states/territories must be held accountable for the severity of lockdowns, border closures, coercion to take vaccines, mandates, job losses, business closures, family separations (to name a few). Human Rights Commissioner ██████████ made comments about the decision to exclude actions taken unilaterally by state and territory governments from the inquiry in a media release<sup>9</sup> (21 September, 2023).

The Catholic Women's League of Australia would be prepared to attend a hearing, and requests to be called to speak.

About the Catholic Women's League of Australia:

*“We are dedicated to building a culture of life; advocating for the respect of human rights with a particular focus on women and children; promoting the teaching of Christ and his Church concerning the dignity, integrity and freedom of the human person; promoting and supporting the formation of women to meet contemporary challenges; upholding the dignity of women through education and encouraging their participation in social and public life ...”.*

## Footnotes:

1. [http://classic.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/cth/consol\\_act/coaca430/s51.html#:~:text=\(xxiiiA.\),\(xxiv\)](http://classic.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/cth/consol_act/coaca430/s51.html#:~:text=(xxiiiA.),(xxiv))
2. <https://www.spectator.com.au/2021/08/mandatory-jabs-and-bans-on-the-unvaccinated-try-getting-that-past-the-high-court/>
3. [https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary\\_Business/Hansard/Hansard\\_Display?bid=chamber/hansards/26448/&sid=0050](https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Hansard/Hansard_Display?bid=chamber/hansards/26448/&sid=0050)
4. <https://amps.redunion.com.au/too-many-dead>
5. [https://www.cochrane.org/CD006207/ARI\\_do-physical-measures-such-hand-washing-or-wearing-masks-stop-or-slow-down-spread-respiratory-viruses](https://www.cochrane.org/CD006207/ARI_do-physical-measures-such-hand-washing-or-wearing-masks-stop-or-slow-down-spread-respiratory-viruses)
6. <https://gbdeclaration.org/why-was-the-declaration-written/>
7. <https://gbdeclaration.org/>
8. <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights>
9. <https://humanrights.gov.au/about/news/media-releases/human-rights-commissioner-critical-covid-inquiry-scope>

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