

Media Release

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Historic legislation passed in Queensland Parliament today will better protect the rights of the most vulnerable in the state.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Service (QLD) LTD (ATSILS) commends the Palaszczuk Government for their unwavering commitment to advancing and protecting the rights of Queenslanders, especially the most vulnerable with the passing of Queensland Human Rights Bill today.

Chief Executive Officer of The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Service (QLD) LTD Shane Duffy said that “Queensland has raised the bar by setting a new standard in human rights that sees the most comprehensive and accessible human rights protections in the country now enshrined in legislation.”

“The legislative protection of human rights is the critical foundation we’ve needed to progress towards a fairer and more equitable Queensland.”

“We look forward to seeing the positive impact these detailed human rights protections will have on addressing elements in the cycle of disadvantage and discrimination that our clients, their families and other vulnerable groups in communities experience daily.”

“We especially welcome the much-needed protections related to the cultural rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the economic, social and cultural rights to education and healthcare contained in the bill.”

The human rights legislation in Queensland has many firsts and improves on laws in Victoria through the establishment of a complaint mechanism that will be facilitated by the creation of the Queensland Human Rights Commission. The Commission will ensure the laws are more accessible to the most vulnerable who often do not have the financial capacity to enforce their human rights by way of legal representation and advocacy.

“We congratulate the Attorney General and Minister for Justice – Yvette D’Ath for seeing this complex legislation through Queensland Parliament and would like to pay tribute to the work of the [Human Rights Act for Queensland campaign](#) (HR4QLD) led by Aimee McVeigh who tirelessly lobbied the Queensland State Government and effectively engaged diverse sections of the community to support this important legislation,” Mr Duffy said.

ATSILS is proud to have been a part of the strong coalition of more than 40 community organisations that supported the HR4QLD campaign who were all united in their belief that protecting human rights in law would improve the lives of vulnerable Queenslanders.

We look forward to continuing the positive dialogue with the Palaszczuk Government and with key stakeholders and we hope to see stronger human rights protections adopted more broadly at a national level in the near future.

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