



16 May 2024

Statement

PROPOSED NEW LAWS – CURFEW POWERS

Today proposed new laws have been tabled in Parliament that will give extraordinary new powers to the Police Commissioner to declare curfews in certain areas as a response to public disorder.

The Bill proposes to exclude safeguards afforded through the Anti-Discrimination Act 1992 that protect individuals from discrimination on the basis of personal attributes, including age, race and disability.

This Bill if made law may result in discriminatory and unequal restrictions on the liberty and freedom of movement of certain groups. At present the proposed laws are quite broad and lack appropriate safeguards.

Quotes from the Children's Commissioner:

“I am deeply concerned this legislation increases the likelihood of declarations that will target and harm vulnerable and marginalised groups, such as Aboriginal children and young people.”

“Rushing through laws that could lead to unequal restrictions on certain groups and increased contact with police can have devastating consequences.”

“I have not been consulted prior to the introduction of this Bill. There is a need to ensure these laws are balanced and proportionate. In order to do so, the NT Government must consult key stakeholders, including legal aid services, peak bodies and relevant oversight bodies, including myself and the Anti-Discrimination Commissioner.”

Shahleena Musk
Children's Commissioner, Northern Territory

Media Contact: occ@nt.gov.au