



**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

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STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

Elizabeth Kikkert MLA (Chair), Michael Pettersson MLA (Deputy Chair),  
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## Submission Cover Sheet

### Inquiry into the Modern Slavery Legislation Amendment Bill 2023

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**THE  
GREENS**

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19 May 2023

Dear Chair,

I thank you and your committee for undertaking an inquiry in my bill, the Modern Slavery Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. Thank you also for accommodating an extension for submissions and inquiry.

My bill touches on a range of different policy areas. It requires deep consideration and evaluation. I am hopeful that these deliberations will lead to thoughtful discussions and consultation involving stakeholders, businesses, Government and the community and that the Committee has the time it needs to put together its recommendations as a result.

### **Federal legislation**

At Federal level, we already have a Modern Slavery system.

The Australian Government is in the process of reviewing this system (the Modern Slavery Act 2018 (Commonwealth)). I understand this to be a particularly high priority area of focus for advocates and stakeholders in this space. Many stakeholders are busy with this process at the moment.

In the 2022-23 (October) Federal Budget, a range of measures to tackle modern slavery were supported including work to “establish a new unit within the Attorney-General’s Department to scope options to establish an Anti-Slavery Commissioner to work with business, civil society and state and territory governments to support compliance with Australia’s Modern Slavery Act 2018 and address modern slavery in supply chains.”

That Budget also funded “\$6.1 million over 4 years from 2022–23 to help consumers choose ethically sourced Australian textile, clothing and footwear products”.

[https://archive.budget.gov.au/2022-23-october/bp2/download/bp2\\_2022-23.pdf](https://archive.budget.gov.au/2022-23-october/bp2/download/bp2_2022-23.pdf)

In the most recent 23-24 Federal Budget, additional funding was provided to establish a Commonwealth Anti-Slavery Commissioner with annual funding of \$2m per annum as well as “\$24.3 million over 4 years from 2023–24 (and \$5.9 million per year ongoing) to pilot an additional referral pathway for the Support for Trafficked People Program and restructure the program to better meet the needs of victim-survivors, while increasing ongoing funding to address current and projected demand.”

### **New South Wales legislation**

The New South Wales Government also has a fully established the NSW Commissioner role as a permanent position after many years of interim arrangements. The Anti-slavery Commissioner for New South Wales is Dr James Cockayne. He is the first commissioner appointed to the role on a full-time basis and his 5-year term commenced on 1 August 2022.

The committee may wish to seek submissions or speak to the current and former interim NSW Commissioners. Their insights into the establishment and operation of a subnational anti-slavery commissioner would be incredibly valuable in getting our legislation right.

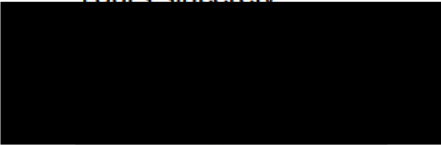
### **The need for ACT legislation**

This bill would ensure the ACT has an Anti-Slavery Commissioner to combat modern slavery occurring within our borders. It would also ensure introduce steps to ensure ACT Government supply chains do not rely on modern slavery elsewhere. It is designed to work in easily with the existing Commonwealth legislation and to make use of existing administrative and operational structures at the Human Rights Commission.

I would also welcome the opportunity to respond to submissions to the bill or answer Committee questions. The submissions published so far by the committee contain some great suggestions for improvements.

I note the national context around Modern Slavery and the fact that many stakeholders are busy with the national review and may not have had time to submit to this one. If you receive further requests for extension, please consider them in this context. It's really important that we get this legislation right to ensure the ACT is doing its part in combatting modern slavery and ensure the broadest range of stakeholders and experts are able to contribute to the creation of these laws is a key part of this.

Yours sincerely



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