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Minister for Health

Minister for Children, Youth and Family Services

Minister for Disability

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Member for Kurrajong

Our ref: CSI-24/330

Mr Michael Pettersson MLA

Chair

Education and Community Inclusion Committee

LACommitteeECI@parliament.act.gov.au

RE: Government response to the Inquiry into Disability Inclusion Bill 2024

Dear ~~Mr Pettersson~~ *Michael*

Thank you for the Committee's report on the inquiry into the Private Member's Bill: the *Disability Inclusion Bill 2024* (the Bill). The ACT Government welcomes the opportunity to provide a response to the inquiry report.

The ACT Government recognises it is the barriers in society that create the experience of disability. It is attitudes, structures and practices that prevent people's participation, rather than individual differences. As a human rights jurisdiction, creating a community where everyone has full and equitable access is a key responsibility of the ACT Government.

The draft Bill is underscored by a commitment to address ableism and remove physical, attitudinal, communication and social barriers people with disability continue to face in the ACT community. This would be achieved through the implementation of a legislative framework which would require the development of a suite of disability inclusion strategies, disability inclusion plans and the establishment of a Disability Advisory Council.

The ACT Government is committed to ensuring the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights, fundamental freedoms and inherent dignity of people with disability in accordance with our existing commitments to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability (UNCRPD), and *Australia's Disability Strategy 2021-31*.

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The ACT Government is currently enacting these commitments through the *ACT Disability Strategy 2024-2033*, along with the *ACT Inclusive Education Strategy 2024-2034*, *ACT Disability Health Strategy 2024-2033*, *ACT Disability Justice Strategy 2019-2029* and a range of disability access and inclusion plans, which are all working to realise the vision where people with disability can fairly and equitably participate in all aspects of community life.

The ACT Government has **noted** the three recommendations for the ACT Government in the inquiry report:

#	Recommendation	ACT Government response
3	Should the Disability Inclusion Bill 2024 pass the Assembly, the committee recommends that the ACT Government explore the compatibility of supported decision-making with the Disability Inclusion Bill 2024, and existing laws.	Noted – the Government will consider this recommendation further should the Assembly pass the Bill.
8	Should the Disability Inclusion Bill 2024 pass the Assembly, the committee recommends that the ACT Government review the bill alongside existing laws (such as the Discrimination Act, Disability Services Act, Human Rights Act, Carers Recognition Act) to streamline multiple reporting requirements across ACT Government and avoid duplication.	Noted – the Government will consider this recommendation further should the Assembly pass the Bill.
10	Should the Disability Inclusion Bill 2024 pass the Assembly, the committee recommends that the ACT Government clearly establish the relationship and transition arrangements between existing disability reference groups across the ACT Government and the proposed Disability Advisory Council.	Noted – the Government will consider this recommendation further should the Assembly pass the Bill. As noted during the Committee process, it is expected that the current Disability Reference Group will transition to become the Disability Advisory Council.

Thank you for the Committee’s consideration of this legislation.

Yours sincerely



Rachel Stephen-Smith MLA
23 August 2024