



Inquiry into Appropriation Bill 2026–2027 and Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2026–2027

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Mr Taimus Werner-Gibbings MLA

Addressed to: Minister for Human Rights

Reference: Human Rights Commission

Hearing: 22/07/2026

In relation to: Woolworths Entry Gates

Question received: 28/07/2026

Answer Due: 06/08/2026

New customer entry gates have been installed at Woolworths Tuggeranong and Belconnen. The gates consist of a series of spring-loaded pylons at approximately knee height that can be pushed in one direction before returning to their original position.

Concerns have been raised with me that they may create barriers for some people with disability, mobility impairments, prams or mobility aids, and may impede some customers from easily entering the store. Has the ACT Human Rights Commission received any complaints, enquiries, representations or requests for advice concerning the recently installed customer entry gates at Woolworths Tuggeranong and Belconnen?

- If a person believed that a store's physical layout or access controls disadvantaged them because of disability, would that be something they could raise with the Human Rights Commission?
- Where concerns are raised about the accessibility of retail premises or access control infrastructure, what powers or mechanisms are available to the ACT Human Rights Commission to investigate, conciliate, facilitate discussions, or otherwise engage with the relevant business?
- Can you clarify the respective roles of the Human Rights Commission, Access Canberra, and WorkSafe ACT in relation to accessibility concerns in privately operated retail premises, so that affected residents know where to raise complaints?

Ms Caitlin Tough MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

- I am informed that the ACT Human Rights Commission has not received a complaint, enquiry or request for advice about the recently installed customer gates at Woolworths Tuggeranong and Belconnen.
- If a person believed that the layout or access controls of a store in the ACT disadvantaged them because of their disability, they could raise this with the ACT Human Rights Commission. The Discrimination Commissioner has powers to consider complaints about unlawful discrimination (including indirect discrimination) on the grounds of disability under the *Discrimination Act 1991*.
- Where a complaint about disability discrimination is made to the Discrimination Commissioner the Commissioner will usually seek a response from a respondent organisation and where possible will seek to resolve the matter through a conciliation process. The Commissioner also has powers to consider matters on her own initiative and may issue a report making recommendations. Where a complaint cannot be resolved through conciliation the Commissioner may refer the matter to the ACT Civil and Administrative Tribunal for determination.
- The ACT Human Rights Commission deals with complaints of alleged discrimination regarding accessibility in relation to privately owned and operated premises in the ACT on the basis of disability, age, parental and carer responsibilities and a range of other protected attributes.
- The Office of the Work Health and Safety Commissioner (WorkSafe ACT) is responsible for monitoring and enforcing compliance with the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (the WHS Act).
- Under the WHS Act, a Person Conducting a Business or Undertaking (PCBU), including a privately operated retail business, has a primary duty of care to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of:
 - workers engaged or influenced by the business, and
 - other people who may be affected by the work, such as visitors, customers, contractors, or members of the public.
- WHS law protects workers and others by creating a proactive legal framework that requires everyone involved in work to identify hazards, manage risks, consult on safety matters, and continuously work to prevent harm.

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- If a worker, or a person who may be affected by business or undertaking, has a safety concern relating to a privately operated retail businesses, they can contact Worksafe ACT directly via phone on 13 22 81 or via email at worksafe@worksafe.act.gov.au .

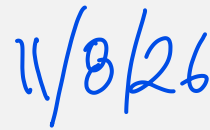
Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates 2026–2027

Signature:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Tough', written over the printed name.

By the Minister for Human Rights, Caitlin Tough

Date:

A handwritten date in blue ink, '11/8/26', written next to the printed date label.