

To the Coronavirus Committee.

24/07/2020

Good morning Ladies and Gentlemen of the Committee.

I have being a Security Guard for 20 years and I have also worked in other industry both public and private, in every signal industry I have worked in I have always had to deal with a lot of different people from all walks of life and I have also met a lot of different types of people some of whom are homeless, suffering mental health problems or people with disabilities' and every time I have dealt with these types of people I have felt there pain there despair, because I to come from a struggling poor family so I can understand relate to them.

However what I saw during this COVID-19 Pandemic is a government which decided to basically say to people well, we don't care about you we don't care if you die or survive, you might ask me why iam saying this well the answer is simple, during the first Stage 3 National Lockdown the Federal Government came to the party and started making available money to people who had just become unemployed, and with very little paperwork I might add, however the Victoria State Government didn't respond in the manner that the Federal Government did. What did the State Government do, it made announcement's but what they neglected to mention was that to receive this money people business had to provide a whole heap of paperwork to the Government to receive some sort of support to keep their businesses afloat so not only did businesses just suffer a massive shock because of Lockdown 1.0 now they had to start filling out mountains of paperwork to supply to the government , so if we think about it for a minute, can the Committee understand the amount of stress and anxiety that would place on the small business owners. Well I can give you a small glimpse I personally know of business owners who during the first lockdown they actually told me that the first preference was to suicide as sad as it sounds that's what they told me, now thank god it didn't happen but because of the amount of paperwork the lack of support and mostly the time it was taking public servants from Victorian Governments to respond to enquiries they felt let down by a system which they thought would be there to help them when they needed it most .

That wasn't the case business owners struggled to get support they struggled to receive funds from the State and the worst thing there mental health deteriorated so bad that Ambulances calls for mental health cases increased by 100% in the first 24 to 48 hours.

Ladies and Gentlemen of the committee is this, the state we want to bring our kids up, a state were when you need help you have to jump thru hoops to get it, a state that only pretends to help the people by making all these public announcements but failing to provide the fine print I think not.

Ladies and Gentlemen of the committee I urge you to look more closely into the State Governments response in relation to there of the mental health response and also in relation to how that assistance that the Government said it was offering was being handled, because I believe and iam sure a lot of people would agree that the State Governments response has being very slow in relation to helping businesses and now with this Lockdown 2.0 which the blames lays squarely at the feet of Premier Daniel

Andrews businesses are at breaking point and again I have spoken to a lot of small businesses and they tell me that this time round they are not even relying on the State Government to assist them, a good example would be the one off \$5000.00 business payment which was announced by Premier Daniel Andrews at the start of Lockdown 2.0 well I don't know what feedback the committee has heard back on that but let me tell you first hand that access to these payments is very hard and a lot of business which I personally know have filed for bankruptcy or just closed up permanently, I mean has anybody actually looked the recent bankruptcy figures well I have and believe me they are not good they will only get worse.

The next example is the \$1500,00 and the \$300.00 hardship payment for people testing positive to Coronavirus announced by Premier Daniel Andrews, for people to receive this payment they must supply so much information that people give up that's why people continue to go to work because they have lost faith and trust in the Victorian Governments.

However the most important issue with Lockdown 2.0 is mental health well let me tell the committee that this time it is ugly very ugly I urge the Premier to come into the suburbs now and see for himself the devastation this lockdown is having, let me give the committee a glimpse, last week there were 4 suicides all males all in the 30 and 40's all with families all with kids but nobody said sorry to these families the media didn't report it why because Premier Daniel Andrews has instructed not to report the suicides because its bad publicity for his Government well let me say to this Mr. Andrews the truth always comes out and if you are a true Leader then come to the suburbs see the devastation don't hide in your office.

In conclusion I would like to recommend that the State Government provide actual cash stimulus to businesses without the paperwork I would recommend that the Government provide proper and actual support to people who have lost everything because of the incompetence of Mr. Andrews, I would also recommend the freezing and waiving of all Council Rates and any other State fee and levies, this would benefit both the small business community and the people, finally please provide more mental health support to people and please don't punish them when they are going to seek help from a friend because let me honest people feel that the Victorian Government, and Victoria Police don't care and that all they want to do is fine people.

Thank you for your time and thank you for accepting my submission.