Submission to the review of the Victorian Charter of Rights and Responsibilities

Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations Committee,
Chair Mr Ed O’Donohue
Parliament House,
Spring Street,
EAST MELBOURNE. Vic 3002
Email: charter.review@parliament.vic.gov.au

Mrs Ida Day

1st July, 2011

Dear Mr O’Donohue,

I call on your committee to support the repeal of the Victorian Charter of Rights and Responsibilities. This law is unnecessary as the rights of Victorians are already adequately protected under common law.

How can there be consensus as to which rights ought to be included in the Charter when, the very fact that successive governments will include, or exclude, rights according to their own whims and ideologies, is evidence that there is no consensus? Further, the process of changing the list of human rights in the Charter from one government to another simply serves to politicise human rights.

The Act is trivialising aspects of the law, turning Victoria into a bureaucratic, “nanny state” and costing Victorian taxpayers millions in the process. As the Herald Sun (“Taxpayers cop red tape madness,” June 24, 2011) has pointed out, millions of dollars have been spent checking if new legislation violates the Charter in ways that are trivial. It is ridiculous spending taxpayers’ money to check if bans on graffiti and fake ID equipment breach the right to freedom of expression, as listed in the Charter.

It is absurd spending money to check if a person’s right to a 10 cent bottle return refund is violated if the person fails to return the bottle and collect the refund. Do we really need to have a legal opinion to decide if a person’s failure to collect a refund violates the person’s right to private property, as listed in the Charter?

Given such shortcomings, and given that there is simply no need for the superfluous protections that the Charter claims to offer, I ask that the Charter be repealed.

Yours sincerely,
Ida Day