I urge the Government Not to wind back / weaken the Victorian Human Rights Charter but rather to strengthen it.

Around 38,000 people around Australia strongly supported more protection of human rights in Australia. Indeed there are so many concerns that thousands attended conferences around the country, and many more submissions presented. A Federal Human Rights Act was recommended a few years back. Many were bitterly disappointed when the Federal Govt. failed to abide by the peoples wishes and the Brennan Report recommendations- this later impacted on the Federal election. Many of us walked away from our Liberal and Labor leadership reaching out to other parties that showed human rights concern.

Where the Federal Government failed to abide by the recommendations of the Brennan hearing, the Victorian Government has been leading the way. The Victorian Human Rights Charter has been about protecting all peoples and even those that often fall through the cracks. This has benefit particularly for minority and poorer groups and others, who often remain voiceless or unheard- then to become subject to policies / hash/ punitive ideological policies and laws as opposed to empowering evidenced -based policies. Ideology vs evidenced based policies.

Human Rights are a fundamental and inherent right of every person. Our churches promote and recognised this fact. We are to treat and protect all Individuals with equal dignity and respect. In doing this we will become truly a more respectful, open, understanding and peaceful state.

I urge that particularly the rights of all people to be respected, and request further, that Victorian Indigenous peoples have the rights to Self- Determination. An essential component in promoting self-respect of our first peoples, of allowing them the responsibility they so wish for, and allows ownership in helping to 'close the gaps' in their communities. If this is denied as a state will fail.

Indigenous Victorians:
I recommend that all polices affecting Indigenous peoples of our state also abide by the all the articles of the 'United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous peoples' and the declaration of human rights; Economic, Social and Cultural Rights etc

Indigenous Victorians must also their Inherent Indigenous rights and human rights protected and allowed: their rights to Self- Determination, Cultural Integrity and Cultural Respect and many others within the UNDRIP.
I would also like to see that all people working in the Victorian Parliament undertake human rights and Cultural awareness training.
I urge Robert Clark and the Government not to wind back the Victorian Human Rights Charter.

I ask you not to repeal or weaken the Victorian Charter, but instead to strengthen its protections for all Victorians. Repealing or weakening the Charter in any way would represent a large step backwards in one of only a handful of countries in the world that don't have a national Bill or Charter of Rights.

Kind Regards

Georgina Gartland