

Kirra Vanzetti

From: Peter Omeara [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, 5 July 2017 9:47 PM
To: LCSC
Subject: Fire Services Reform Bill and presumptive Legislation

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To the Parliamentary Select committee

I wish to make a short submission to show my full support for the Fire Service Reform Bill and Presumptive Legislation.

The population of Victoria has grown at an ever increasing rate over the past 70 years, the last census report states the Victorian population is increasing annually by over 100,000 people, many of those moving to outer suburban and rural city centres, yet our current fire service model which was formalised in the mid 1900's has had no significant change or reform in the decades since. I find it very hard to understand how anyone could argue against the provision of a better Fire Service and subsequently, a safer Victoria for all Victorians. After all, the safety of our community is and should be paramount in all decision making, particularly of our elected representatives in the Parliament. I can only assume those who do argue against, do not understand the dangers posed to our community by structure fires or they do not have the safety of our community as their first priority.

One simple fact is, for a room in a structure to flash over (become totally involved in fire) in the 1950's, would take in excess of 17.5 minutes. This was mainly due to the use of more natural materials in the furnishings used back then. The 1950s was when the current fire service model was developed.

For a room to flash over today, it will take only 2 to 4 minutes. This is due mainly to our homes being furnished with products made primarily from hydrocarbons and other man made synthetics. Not only do these modern furnishings and materials burn hotter and faster, they also give off more toxic poisons and gases which today's firefighters are exposed to. This is the main reason for the higher number of firefighters developing cancers compared to the general population. This fact has been acknowledged in other Australian states and in parts of the world, yet in Victoria we still have no presumptive rights.

The outdated fire service model Victoria currently employs is not based on world's best practice. You, the Honourable members of the committee have an opportunity to do something about this right now. What a crucial moment in Victoria's history, where you have such an important role in taking our Fire Services out of the 1950s and bringing them into the modern era, making the safety of all Victorians your number one priority, and acknowledging the real health dangers faced by Firefighters in their service of the community with presumptive rights.

The following video's from NIST (National Institute of Standards and Testing) of America and Catalyst (our own ABC) are just a few of the many examples of studies from around the world, showing how dangerous structure fires have become to our community and our Firefighters. Time is critical in the chain of survival, the quicker you can get professionally trained firefighters to a structure fire the better the chances for survival of people in peril.

.*<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aDNPhq5ggoE>
 <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aDNPhq5ggoE>>*

.*<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u1WRTQaQnFs>
 <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u1WRTQaQnFs>>*

This has been a brief outline of this one point and I have only touched on one of the many reasons to support the proposed reforms. There are so many compelling reasons to support the Fire Services Reform

bill and Presumptive Rights legislation. I am sure you will receive many responses outlining these. You have a very important task ahead going through all the submissions, and I wish you well in your task. Knowing you Have such a task ahead of you I will keep it short and end my submission here. I just ask one thing of you, please keep the safety of Victorian families and firefighters at the forefront of your decision making, it has to be about what is best for our community not individuals. Thank you for taking the time to read this submission.

Kind Regards Peter O'Meara