

Kirra Vanzetti

From: VU, Doan [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 6 July 2017 10:13 AM
To: LCSC
Subject: Fire Service Reform

Assistant Clerk Committees
Department of the Legislative Council
Parliament House
Spring Street
East Melbourne VIC 3002

Dear Members of the Select Committee,

My name is Doan Vu. I was born and raised in Melbourne. My parents, who are my only family in this country, arrived in Victoria in 1980 as Vietnamese refugees. My Father has never left Victoria ever since he arrived. My Mother took a very brief trip to Vietnam due to a tragedy in her family, but that is literally the one and only time she has left Victoria. My point is, Victoria is our home and we care about it immensely. My parents live in Mill Park, a suburb within the MFB district but on the fringe of the MFB-CFA border. They are old and semi-dependent upon me, their only child.

I write to you today out of concern for the safety of my parents, my friends and the wider Victorian community.

However, I am not just a concerned resident of this state. I am a professional firefighter based at the MFB Brunswick fire station. I have been in this role for over six years and I possess the following qualifications:

- Certificate 2 & 3 in Public Safety (Firefighting & Emergency Operation), MFB
- Emergency Medical Response, MFB
- Basic First Aid, St John's
- Bachelor of Engineering (H2A Honours), Melbourne University
- Bachelor of Commerce, Melbourne University

I have no doubt that you know and understand the controversies surrounding this Bill and its stakeholders. I am not here to reiterate the multitude of opinions thrown at you. Instead, I ask you, to consider the following.

The objective of the reform is to update and provide a better fire service for Victorians. It achieves through several initiatives including but not limited to:

- Improving the safety of Victorians by updating the fire coverage in key urban residential areas that have experienced a great increase in population growth, resulting in unrealistic and dangerous demands on volunteer firefighters and the community.

- Ensuring that in these highly urbanised areas, firefighters are fully qualified to turn out and perform our jobs all types of calls. Currently, and unfortunately, a very high number of volunteer firefighters are unable to do this because they lack, for example, structural firefighting training and Breathing Apparatus qualifications.
- Ensuring that these highly urbanised areas have a dedicated station of full-time, 24/7, professional firefighters who are always ready to respond to calls from the fire station in a fire truck that has been constantly checked and replenished with equipment and supplies. Professional firefighters do not respond from their homes or businesses via their personal vehicles.
- Further to this, you can analyse call history data to verify the rapid response delivered by professional firefighters and compare this to the frequent “failed to respond” or “delayed” response from volunteer stations. Responding to calls is time-critical to save lives and minimise damage to property.
- The reform will ensure that a minimum of seven professional firefighters in two fire trucks will respond to a fire. This will ensure that there are sufficient crews and equipment to rescue civilians, attend to the injured, protect the surrounding homes and occupants, and attack the fire. This is an issue of public safety.
- A highly urbanised area does not only contain homes, but also critical infrastructure such as schools, hospitals, businesses, factories and utility supplies. The reform also provides better 24/7 protection for these places, including when they are occupied by civilians.
- A unified professional fire service will ensure an improved and streamlined service to all Victorians, rather than retaining a fragmented structure that has caused issues in the past.
- There will be an independent Fire District review panel to oversee the fire service and ensure it is performing to the standard expected by all Victorians by using data from ESTA (Triple 0), projected population figures and urban development information.
- An important consideration is that the reform will achieve all the above with absolutely no detriment to volunteer firefighters and the noble contributions they provide to their communities.

There are members of the public and a small fraction of volunteers who claim that this reform is detrimental to Victorians. Their arguments are based on false information. It is very obvious and I will not insult your intelligence by delving into this matter.

Thank you for taking the time to read my submission. I appreciate that you have a difficult job ahead but I trust that you will make the right decision to protect the people of Victoria.

Yours Sincerely,

Doan Vu

[Redacted]

Leading Firefighter Doan Vu
MFB Brunswick Fire Station

[Redacted]

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