

Submission to the COVID-19 Response Inquiry

To the Members of the Independent Panel,

I am writing this submission to voice concerns over certain aspects of Australia's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. While I recognise the importance of the Inquiry's goal to improve pandemic preparedness, there are critical areas that require thorough scrutiny.

Concerns Over Specific Pandemic Measures

Mask and Vaccine Mandates: The implementation of mask and vaccine mandates had significant impacts on individual freedoms and social dynamics. These measures, often invasive, warrant a detailed review to assess their necessity, effectiveness, and proportionality.

Lockdowns and Curfews: The economic, social, and psychological impacts of lockdowns and curfews have been profound. An evaluation of these measures is essential to understand their long-term effects on Australian society and whether they were the most appropriate response.

Communication Strategies: It is quite clear that there was an unwarranted use of fear in public health messaging. It's important to analyse whether such communication strategies were effective or whether they contributed to unnecessary panic and distress among the public.

Concerns Over the Composition and Scope of the Inquiry

Panel Composition: The appointment of Inquiry panel members who have previously expressed support for certain pandemic measures raises questions about the objectivity and impartiality of the Inquiry. Panel members who have expressed support for such measures should recuse themselves.

Exclusion of Unilateral State and Territory Government Decisions: One of the most significant omissions in the Inquiry's scope is the exclusion of actions taken unilaterally by state and territory governments. These decisions, including state-imposed lockdowns and border controls, were pivotal to the nation's pandemic response and should be included in the Inquiry.

The Need for a Comprehensive Review

While the Terms of Reference for the Inquiry are extensive, it is crucial that the above-mentioned areas are not overlooked. A truly comprehensive review should encompass all aspects of the government's response, including those currently outside the Inquiry's scope.

Conclusion

This submission represents a collective call for a more inclusive and thorough investigation into Australia's COVID-19 response. It also urges for freedom and liberty to not ever be cast aside with fearmongering as it was by Australian governments during the pandemic. We urge the Inquiry to consider these points to ensure transparency, accountability, and the safeguarding of Australian values and liberties.

Michael Higgins

Concerned Veteran