

Subject:
Date:

ASIO Bill
Saturday, 23 May 2020 4:27:27 PM

Mr Andrew Hastie MP
Chair
Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Re: ASIO Powers Amendment Bill 2020

Dear Mr Hastie and members of the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security,

I am writing to you to express my extreme concern at certain provisions of the ASIO Powers Amendment Bill 2020. The specific issues that alarm me most are the following:

- the authorisation of detention and questioning for persons from the age of 14 (s.34b)
- the authorisation of oral warrants that allow for arrest, search and detention by force (s.34cd)
- the limits on means of challenging a warrant
- the lack of limits on the number of warrants that can be issued and therefore their duration (s.34dl)
- the limits on access to counsel and the power of the Attorney General's delegate to override the choice of counsel (s.34CB, s.34D, s.34FC).

All these provisions represent an unjustified denial of human rights. The preoccupation of the government and the nation with the coronavirus pandemic must not permit this proposed legislation to escape proper scrutiny.

I appeal to you to ensure the Bill is amended to ensure that it does not allow for such radical curtailment of individual liberties.

Yours sincerely,

Tom Knowles

