

We, the undersigned, respectfully petition the Committee to recommend **rejection in full** of the Australian CDC Bills on national-sovereignty and democratic-oversight grounds.

The Bills would establish a statutory Australian Centre for Disease Control (CDC) led by a Director-General with broad information-gathering, publishing, and international engagement powers. They also relocate key international interface functions (including IHR focal point responsibilities) to the CDC and create emergency data-sharing powers that operate despite other Australian laws.

Our key objections include:

1. **International arrangements without treaty scrutiny:** The Director-General may enter arrangements with foreign governments, international organisations and international partnerships that are not treaties and therefore bypass parliamentary treaty review, enabling external standards and expectations to shape domestic policy without Parliament's consent.
2. **Emergency authorisations overriding other laws:** During a declared severe or unforeseen threat, the Director-General may authorise collection, use and disclosure of “relevant information” and those authorisations apply **despite any other law**, including to cross-border recipients—diminishing Australia’s information sovereignty precisely when it matters most.
3. **Structural externalisation via the IHR interface:** Moving the International Health Regulations National Focal Point and related surveillance levers to the CDC embeds WHO-directed timelines and processes within the agency, reducing parliamentary and ministerial gatekeeping over international notifications and responses.
4. **Mission creep beyond communicable disease:** The Bills’ scope of “public health matters” extends to environmental health and the health effects of climate change. Combined with emergency overrides, this breadth invites non-health policy domains to be pulled into CDC-led international data flows and standards.
5. **Transparency narrowed at critical moments:** Although some advice must be published, wide “exempt material” carve-outs and additional secrecy provisions

(including FOI Schedule changes in the consequential Bill) will limit public and parliamentary scrutiny of directions, declarations and foreign arrangements.

6. **Compulsion and private recipients:** The Director-General may compel information with civil penalties and may designate non-government entities (including international bodies) as eligible recipients under DG-made instruments, risking dispersal of sensitive Australian data outside robust public-law safeguards.
7. **Insufficient ex-ante parliamentary control:** The Bills concentrate discretion in an unelected official and rely on ex-post transparency rather than ex-ante parliamentary approval for the most sovereignty-sensitive actions.

Accordingly, we petition the Committee to recommend that both Bills be rejected in full.