

Submission to the Senate Standing Legal and Constitutional Affairs Legislation Committee
on the inquiry into the
Ensuring Northern Territory Rights Bill 2021

This is my submission to the Senate Standing Legal and Constitutional Affairs Legislation Committee on the inquiry into the Ensuring Northern Territory Rights Bill 2021. I am an Australian citizen and a resident of the ACT.

Dear Committee,

As a citizen and resident of an Australian territory, a territory that is supposed to be self-governing, I support the intent of the bill. Namely, **I fully support the removal of limits** on the Northern Territory Legislative Assembly's powers to make laws in relation to the acquisition of property other than on just terms, voluntary assisted dying and the conferring of powers relating to the hearing and determining of employment disputes. I also support the repealing of the Euthanasia Laws Act 1997.

The powers of self-governing territories to pass legislation on matters concerning their residents and citizens should be no different from those of self-governing states. Australians residing in all self-governing jurisdictions should have equal democratic representation as reflected in the powers of their respective governments.

I believe that the bill should be renamed to ensure that it includes all self-governing territories equally and not the Northern Territory alone.

Our elected representatives in Federal Government should ensure that there are no “second-class” Australian citizens. That is, they should defend and secure the democratic rights of all of us equally no matter in which jurisdiction we reside.

The bill should not be seen as about euthanasia laws or any other specific law that may be making current news. It is about something more enduring and more universal – the concept of democracy for all Australians.

Real self-government and true democracy should be returned to the people of the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory.

I support the passing of the Bill.

Yours sincerely,

Errol Fries

ACT

29 August 2021