

The Secretary  
Joint Sessional Committee on Gender and Equality  
Parliament House, Hobart  
[genderandequality@parliament.tas.gov.au](mailto:genderandequality@parliament.tas.gov.au)

24 January 2025

Dear Secretary

**Financial redress under the Expungement of Historical Offences Amendment Bill 2024**

TasCOSS welcomes this opportunity to provide further feedback in relation to the provisions of the *Expungement of Historical Offences Bill 2024* (the Bill) relating to financial redress.

The Tasmanian Council of Social Service (TasCOSS) is the peak body for the community services industry in *lutruwita*/Tasmania. Our Vision is of one *lutruwita*/Tasmania, free of poverty and inequality, where everyone has the same opportunity. Our Mission is to challenge and change the systems, behaviours and attitudes that create poverty, inequality and exclusion, to ensure all Tasmanians have equal opportunity to live a good life.

TasCOSS' provides this letter in support Equality Tasmania's submission to the Inquiry relating to the financial redress component of the Bill.

TasCOSS strongly supports the following key messages from Equality Tasmania:

- An independent assessor should be appointed to determine the appropriate amount to be awarded as redress;
- If an independent assessor is not able to be appointed and the Committee is responsible for determining an appropriate amount for redress, they must consider the extreme and far-reaching injustice and impact of the previous laws, including (but not limited to) loss of employment, estrangement from family and community, shame, stigma, criminalisation and incarceration;
- That proposed financial redress should not be a tokenistic amount, but rather an amount which confirms the clear commitment from the Government to genuinely acknowledge and provide redress for the significant harm caused to those charged and/or convicted; and
- That the redress process should be streamlined and payment is an automatic outcome of a successful expungement application.

I note the scheme is likely to involve a relatively small number of applications and is therefore unlikely to place an unjustifiable burden on the resources of the State.

I also refer the Committee to TasCOSS' earlier letter in support of the Bill,<sup>1</sup> in which we recommended the establishment of a redress scheme for those who were impacted by charges or convictions under Tasmania's repealed legislation criminalising homosexuality and cross-dressing. In this letter, TasCOSS expressed its support for the recommendations of the Independent Review Report, as well as strongly supporting the introduction of a formal scheme for financial redress.

TasCOSS further recommends, as outline in our earlier letter, additional funding to raise awareness of the expungement scheme and to support community organisations to promote awareness of the scheme and assist community members with applications.

Please do not hesitate to contact my office if you have any questions or would like to discuss further.

Yours faithfully



Adrienne Picone  
Chief Executive Officer

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<sup>1</sup> TasCOSS, Letter to Department of Justice, 'Expungement of Historical Offences Amendment Bill 2023' (March 2023).