



LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

STANDING COMMITTEE ON LAW AND JUSTICE

MEDIA RELEASE

INQUIRY INTO MANDATORY DISEASE TESTING BILL 2020

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
30 APRIL 2021

The Upper House committee examining the Mandatory Disease Testing Bill 2020 has tabled its report today.

The bill seeks to establish a mandatory disease testing scheme to assist frontline workers exposed to risk of transmission of a blood-borne virus by the deliberate action of a third party.

Committee Chair, the Hon Wes Fang, said, 'The committee understands that this bill has come to our committee for examination in the context of a rising trend of assaults on police, correctional service and emergency workers. These workers may be exposed to others' blood and other bodily fluids through violent incidents in the course of their duties. This can cause fear of catching a blood-borne disease, even where the risk is low. We understand that, for police and correctional services workers, mandatory disease testing of a third party may provide some information to help manage anxiety at a difficult time.'

Mr Fang continued, 'The committee also acknowledges concerns raised by stakeholders, including whether this scheme is necessary given low prevalence and low risk of transmission of HIV, Hepatitis B and C in most situations faced by police and correctional service workers. Stakeholders also raised concerns about the infringement on civil liberties, and ethical concerns involved in mandatory blood testing. Additionally, specific concerns were raised with the drafting of the bill. These should be addressed as the bill is debated, to ensure that the circumstances in which a mandatory testing order can be issued are clear and evidence-based, that there are adequate safeguards and oversight of decisions, and that children and vulnerable people are protected.'

The report recommends that debate on the bill proceed in the Upper House, and that concerns identified by stakeholders as set out in the report be addressed during debate in the House.

The inquiry report and other documents including submissions and hearing transcripts are available on the [inquiry website](#).

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For further information please contact Committee Chairman, the Hon Wes Fang MLC, on 9230 2888