



LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

STANDING COMMITTEE ON LAW AND JUSTICE

MEDIA RELEASE

Parliamentary committee to consider bill to exclude medical cannabis users from driving offences

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

7 April 2022

A NSW Upper House committee is beginning its examination of a bill that seeks to change the *Road Transport Act 2013* to exclude medicinal cannabis users from offences related to driving under the influence of certain drugs – and members of the community are being invited to have their say before 1 May 2022.

The [Road Transport Amendment \(Medicinal Cannabis - Exemptions from Offences\) Bill 2021](#) would change legislation which currently provides that a person using any prescribed illicit drug cannot drive a motor vehicle, occupy a driver's seat or accompany a learner driver in a vehicle. If passed, the bill would exclude users of medicinal cannabis from the application of these offences while a prescribed illicit drug is present in their oral fluid, blood or urine. The Act already provides a defence for people using morphine.

The Chair of the Law and Justice Committee conducting the inquiry, the Hon Chris Rath MLC, said: "Research on medicinal cannabis has grown substantially in recent years, as has the use of it among people with health conditions, including under a legal licencing scheme in New South Wales where doctors can prescribe it for pain relief in certain circumstances.

"The committee anticipates hearing a broad range of expert evidence and community views on the exemptions proposed by this bill. We will examine whether the changes in the bill are necessary and beneficial – and would welcome all views on this issue."

The committee invites interested organisations and community members to make a submission to the inquiry via the submissions portal at www.bit.ly/bill-inquiry-submissions. Submissions are due by **1 May 2022**.

There will also be a public hearing for this inquiry, to be held in May 2022. A full schedule will be published on the inquiry's webpage at www.bit.ly/medicinal-cannabis-exemptions closer to the time and, as with all parliamentary hearings, it will be streamed live via the Parliament's website at www.bit.ly/webcastnsw.

The committee's reporting date is 11 August 2022.

For more information about the inquiry, including the committee membership and the terms of reference, see www.bit.ly/medicinal-cannabis-exemptions.

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For further information, please contact Committee Chair, the Hon Chris Rath MLC, on (02) 9230 2534.