

September 27<sup>th</sup> 2018



Submission to Select Committee on Personal Choice and Community Safety

I am pleased and thankful such a committee as your is underway, and would like to share my thoughts on your points of reference as follows:

As regards to cycling and the compulsory wearing of helmets, the fact that cycling is such a healthy and sustainable activity, benefiting society broadly in so many ways (healthier population, less pollution, fewer medical costs), I think it is to be encouraged and supported and allow for the risks of injury to be taken by those doing it, with or without helmets. There are much more sophisticated arguments for the non-compulsory helmet rules as seen much across more cycling-heavy countries in Europe etc., and I do not have scope to cover these for you now. I simply wish to indicate that I believe the argument is there and strong and encourage your further consideration in order to revoke compulsory helmet laws in W.A. I trust there are more complete and explanatory submissions on this point.

The second issue for consideration I would like to bring to your committee is that of the childhood vaccination schedule. It is in the interest of the whole population that people are healthy and not spreading preventable and highly contagious diseases. I believe it is also paramount that people have the right to choose to vaccinate their children and/or themselves through informed consent, which necessitates they not be under duress such as financial pressure, in order to make that decision. It is a medical procedure involving minimal, but some significant, risks and I think it is no way a choice to made lightly or be pressured into. Every parent wants the best for their child and the community at large. After researching the various vaccines (the most reliable information being from the company's product information inserts in the vaccine packets, and statistical records on diseases), I decided not to fully vaccinate my child, and as a sole parent am suffering financial hardship and limited work options because of the discriminatory social support and childcare available for not-fully vaccinated children. I think this is far from an ideal situation. I invest my time and money in preventative care and being available to tend and nurse my child as necessary, and we are very healthy and lend little to no pressure on the public health system. I am neither pro nor anti-vaccine, I am simply pro-choice and would strongly urge the committee to examine the laws putting such financial and work and educational-opportunity pressure on families to vaccinate. Again, much, much more could be said and research etc., shown to support this point, and yet as a sole parent my time to write this submission is already at it's end.

If more information would be appreciated or required for either of my two issues raised – helmets and vaccinations – please do not hessite to contact me and I will endeavor to answer any further queries. For the time being, may my submission be accepted, investigated and weighed with the knowledge that some people (such as myself) take pride in living an active and healthy lifestyle and strongly urge the government to leave the opportunity for others to also take such personal responsibility without coercion. I do, always, wear a helmet by the way – and my child also – and would continue to do so without the threat of fines from the police, simply because I think it's the responsible thing to do.

Thank you for your consideration,

Nicole Peterson