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Queensland
Family & Child
Commission

The Research Director
Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee
Parliament House
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Dear Research Director

The Queensland Family and Child Commission (QFCC) is pleased to note the amendments and policy objectives proposed under the Bail (Domestic Violence) and Another Act Amendment Bill 2017.

The QFCC is committed to promoting the safety, wellbeing and best interests of children and young people. Preventing domestic and family violence is a crucial aspect of this commitment. While the QFCC supports the broad objectives of this Bill, further evaluation of similar schemes in other jurisdictions would help to identify the potential impact of such provisions in Queensland.

The QFCC notes the provision to reverse the presumption of bail for an alleged offender charged with a relevant domestic violence offence. This is in keeping with findings of the report of the Special Taskforce on Domestic and Family Violence in Queensland, although it is important to note it was not a formal recommendation made by the Taskforce.

Additionally, the QFCC notes provisions in the Bill to alert a victim of a relevant domestic violence offence about the outcome of a defendant's application for bail, or an offender's application for parole. This could increase safeguards for children affected by domestic and family violence. The QFCC also notes provisions to allow for an urgent review of a bail decision in a higher court.

Further consideration may be required into the proposal to establish special bail conditions for a tracking device to be imposed by a court or a police officer authorised to grant bail. New South Wales is currently trialling the use of GPS trackers in 'high-risk' situations. Further evaluation of this trial should be undertaken to determine whether similar provisions should be introduced in Queensland.

Yours sincerely

Cheryl Vardon
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