



Hi David,

Here's an update on politics and news across the Northern Metropolitan Region.

In this issue — the government wants to expand their covid powers, live music gets a boost, I chat to Ged Kearney, and the world celebrates Bisexual Visibility Day.

COVID-19 UPDATES:

Check [here](#) for the most up-to-date information and advice from Victoria's Chief Health Officer.

If you have symptoms please get tested, for more information go to www.dhhs.vic.gov.au.



Mo' Powers Mo' Problems

Shirley Bassey once sang 'Yes I've seen it before - just little bits of history repeating', and while she never lived through a pandemic, I am sure she was referring to Victoria's policing and health powers.

The State Government came out with the [COVID-19 Omnibus \(Emergency Measures\) and Other Acts Amendment Bill](#), and the majority of it is fine. It extends provisions we granted in April such as the ability to extend family violence orders, online hosting parliamentary committees, judge-only trials and extending the notice period for long-term injured workers who are due to transition off WorkCover weekly payments.

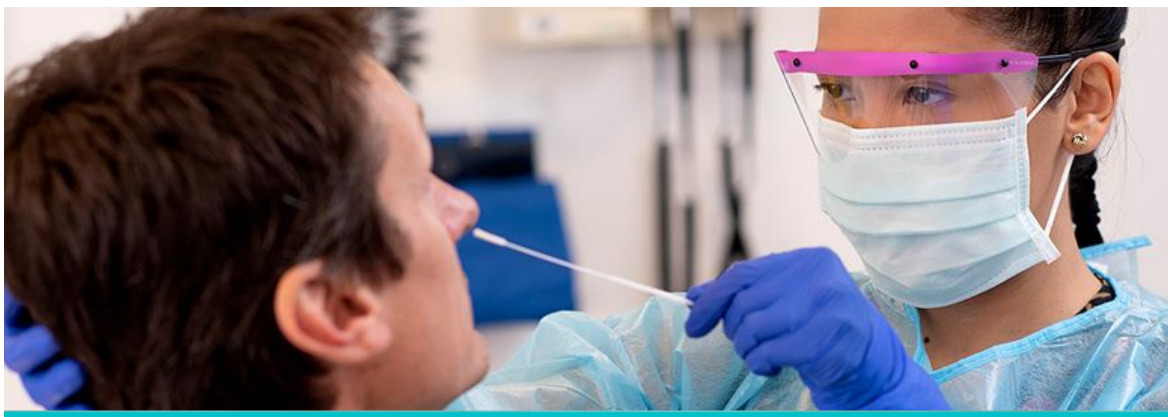
However, there are just two clauses that a majority in the upper house, as well as legal experts, are taking issue with.

The Bill gives 'authorised officers' the power to detain people suspected of infection who they believe are *likely* to break the COVID restrictions, with no bail process. It also broadens the scope of who the Government can appoint as authorised officers to include public servants such as WorkSafe inspectors, PSOs or anyone the Department considers appropriate, such as someone with a strong connection to a cultural community group.

There is little evidence to suggest that non-compliance in workplaces is rampant, and the government has not given me a sufficient explanation of why these extraordinary powers are needed right now. Leading Victorian QC's wrote a letter to members of the Legislative Council, urging the house to vote against or amend Bill, you can read their letter [here](#).

The power given by these two clauses powers are too broad to be supported — but there will be ample time before it is debated to find a way forward with reasonable amendments which would limit or remove these excessive powers.

You can listen to my chat with Neil Mitchell about the new laws [here](#).



Restrictions easing

With the numbers going down, on Sunday the Premier announced some easing of the restrictions. Whilst I am obviously happy to have the curfew lifted, as it was not at the request of the CHO, I think the government could have gone further in relaxing the 5 kilometre rule.

I have also advocated that dance schools in regional Victoria should be able to get up and running as soon as possible. It seems very unfair that a child who does ballet should miss out while their sibling is able to play after school sports.



Health Minister Resigns

On Saturday, the Health Minister, Jenny Mikakos resigned. Jenny was strong on some of the issues close to my political heart.

While we didn't agree on many issues, she was there for the Safe Access Zones legislation that helped protect women's medical privacy and she was there for the Voluntary Assisted Dying laws that now give so many people peace of mind at the end of their life.

You can read my full statement [here](#).



Facebook Live with Ged Kearney MP

On Monday I had a great chat to the fabulous Member for Cooper, Ged Kearney.

We discussed some of the issues facing aged care and what needs to change in order to make older Australians the focus of the laws and regulations governing the sector

You can watch the discussion [here](#).



Live Music Gets a Boost

Back in June I joined forces with the wonderful team at [Save Our Scene](#) to ask the government for much needed financial support for our live music industry. To their credit they announced a \$15m support package and last Sunday the first round of successful applicants were released.

Many bars in the electorate were successful including some of my favourites - Old Bar, Bar 303 and Bar Ousso.

You can check out the full list [here](#) - and don't worry if you're place wasn't named, a second round will be announced soon.



Bi Visibility Day

Celebrated on September 23 since 1999, Bi Visibility Day raises awareness about the challenges bisexual people face such as bi-romantic erasure.

It was chosen in September to honour bisexual icon Freddy Mercury, Bi Sexuality is often misunderstood and invisible, it deserves to be celebrated!



Reminder Permitted Worker Permits

Reminder to update Permitted Worker Permits

If you are a permitted workplace and your staff attend a worksite, make sure you have issued your employees an up-to-date permit.

Important things to know:

- If businesses have issued permits with future date ranges, they do not need to reissue permitted worker permits.
- Businesses can edit and add to the dates on the permitted worker permits they have currently issued to workers if required.

Download the [Permitted Worker Permit](#).

Be kind, stay home, wash your hands and enjoy your week!

Fiona Patten MP

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