



Hi there,

Well, hello and welcome to the second edition of our revamped newsletter.

Let us know any ideas of what you think we should include. You're the reader after all! Let's get into it.



## MISINFORMATION RIFE ON PANDEMIC LEGISLATION

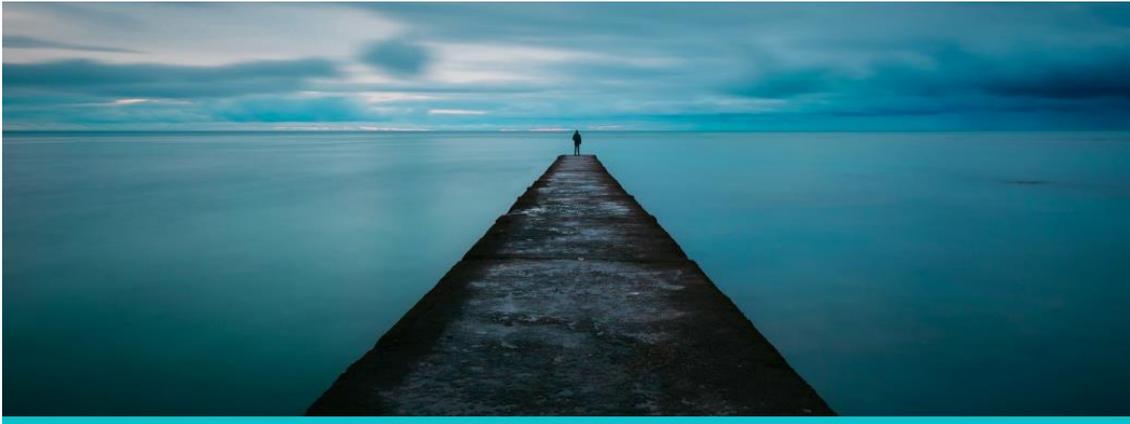
I am both surprised and disappointed at the way Victoria's proposed pandemic legislation has been deliberately misrepresented in the community, and so widely.

If you would like a fair and independent appraisal, I recommend [this statement](#) published by Liberty Victoria. Or for an easier read, [this article](#) by Hugh De Kretser of the Human Rights Law Centre, which was published in Fairfax papers today.

I have also published a little [myth-buster](#) on my website.

But there's some other things going on as well, so enjoy the read.

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## LET'S END LONELINESS

We are ramping up our [campaign to end loneliness](#). There's research on our website that provides comprehensive information.

The key moment of the campaign will be when I move next Wednesday a motion in the Legislative Council to elevate the problem – and facilitate the solutions – by allocating it a ministerial portfolio.

## FOLLOW THE LEADERS

The conservative UK government did so years ago. So has Japan. There's much more coming in other nations. We need to do it here in Victoria - indeed throughout our nation.

We can save many lives. We can improve many lives. We can save scarce public funds and cut the lost productivity to businesses.

It's something I've been advocating for the [past few years](#), and it is high time to get it done.

## AN EPIDEMIC OF SUFFERING

We are suffering an ongoing loneliness epidemic. Loneliness is killing us. The pandemic has exacerbated the epidemic.

One on four Australians (not the lonely quarter) is a volunteer at one or more of the nation's 600,000 community organisation – ranging from local sporting clubs to political and social advocacy.

Research finds married Australians are the least lonely, compared with those who are single, separated or divorced. There are no significant differences in loneliness by gender.

## **DON'T JUST SIT THERE...**

There is so much we can do to tackle this human, social and economic problem.

It's considered as dangerous as one of the greatest causes of premature death, smoking tobacco – at a rate of 15 cigarettes a day.

There are profound links between mental and physical wellbeing. Overall health and contentment depend on both.

Loneliness is a universal source of individual human sadness that can lead to depression and anxiety, the most common forms of mental illness, but is an acute public health problem.

Studies across the world show loneliness is associated with elevated risks of dementia and chronic diseases, and with premature death. It undermines the immune system and pairs with poor cardiovascular health.

## **GOVERNMENT HAS A ROLE TO PLAY**

The World Health Organization (WHO) are calling for more action from governments on loneliness, so you know we are at a tipping point.

Earlier this year, the Director of the WHO Department of Social Determinants of Health, Dr Etienne Krug, said ...

“WHO calls on all governments to give social isolation and loneliness the political priority and resources that they deserve, to ensure that all people benefit from a shared spirit of friendship and solidarity.”

An [outstanding report](#) prepared by Ben McDonald, who was seconded to my office through the Parliamentary Internship Program also explored the role of government in addressing this issue.

## **BE PART OF THE SOLUTION — AND MAYBE EVEN SAVE YOUR OWN LIFE**

One immediate way you can help is to please send the email on the [campaign site](#) to your parliamentary representatives to urge them to support it. It just might save *your* life, or that of someone you love. Thank you to everyone who has already done this.

Loneliness is broadly defined as being distressingly unsatisfied with one's personal and social relationships. Often, this simply means too few people with whom to talk and share daily existence.

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### Local music showcase!

The pandemic has devastated the live music industry.

I have been calling for more support for venues, but our musicians need help too.

At least we are starting to see the re-emergence of live music and capacity limits in venues will cease once we hit 90% vaccination, which is not too far away now!

Rapture, rebirth and kaleidoscopic desert dreamscapes etched across the undersides of her eyelids: Ruby Jones is ready and willing to take communion with the ghosts of her past. Blending Jones' searing vocals with the kind of washed out, psychedelia-steeped sonic palette that pulls the heat from your fingertips, Jones' tempestuous brand of bliss is uniquely her own. Melbourne born and bred, she cut her teeth on the local scene before recording and touring internationally with Clairy Browne & The Bangin' Rackettes.

Today marks the release of her long awaited debut solo record 'The Woman Who Loves You'.

Musicians make a pittance from Spotify – so we say spend the money you usually would on a gig, by buying a record or some merch.

Song of the week: [Virtue by Kilo](#)

Video: [Launch of the Global Drug Policy Index](#)

That's it for now, have a lovely weekend!

**Fiona**