

QUEENSLAND

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Community outcry over moves to abolish Public Advocate

The Queensland Government's move to abolish the Office of the Public Advocate has sparked an outcry from community leaders who warn that the role of the Public Advocate as an independent statutory body is now more crucial than ever.

Queensland Manager of National Disability Services, Valmae Rose said that community leaders have urged the Premier not to support recommendation 133 of the Weller Report and abolish the Office of the Public Advocate in Queensland.

"We believe that the Office of the Public Advocate is an essential piece of the minimal infrastructure in place to defend and promote the human rights of an extremely vulnerable group of Queenslanders; those with a decision-making disability."

"In particular, we commend the work of the current incumbent, Michelle Howard, and her constructive engagement in policy debate to promote the rights of people with a decision-making disability."

"We support the continued independence of this Office and do not agree with the reasoning provided in the report to justify abolition and transfer into the Office of the Adult Guardian," Ms Rose said.

For media comment, please call:

- Queensland Manager for National Disability Services, Valmae Rose on (07) 3357 4188; *or*
- Executive Director of the Queensland Alliance, Jeff Cheverton on 0437 544 366; *or*
- Director of Queensland Advocacy Inc, Kevin Cocks on 0402 288 419.

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