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Victorian Law Reform Commission
GPO Box 4637
Melbourne VIC 3001

Via email: law.reform@lawreform.vic.gov.au

Re: Inquiry into committals

We refer to the request for submissions to this inquiry.

The Victorian Council for Civil Liberties ('Liberty Victoria') is one of Australia's leading civil liberties organisations, working to defend and extend human rights and freedoms in Victoria since 1936. For more than eighty years we have advocated for civil liberties and human rights. We speak out when such rights and freedoms are threatened by governments or other organisations. By mentoring students and young professionals, we develop the next generation of human rights advocates through the Rights Advocacy Project (RAP) (formerly, Young Liberty for Law Reform). Further information about our activities can be found at www.libertyvictoria.org.au.

The VLRC has sought comments to guide its review and the recommendations it will make toward legislative, procedural and administrative changes in relation to Victoria's committal system and related pre-trial procedures.

Liberty Victoria recognizes the significant value of committal proceedings and the role they play in ensuring adequate disclosure, promoting the early resolution of cases before the courts, minimizing impact on vulnerable witnesses and ultimately easing pressures on the criminal justice system. Such proceedings enable an accused person to be apprised of the case against them and assess the strength of the evidence, but also give the prosecutor an opportunity to properly evaluate the case that has been assembled.

It is vital to bear in mind that committal proceedings are necessary to the protection of an accused person's right to a fair trial.

In relation to the specific proposal by the Supreme Court of Victoria referred to in the VLRC issues paper, we have previously made a submission that can be found [here](#).

We have also had the opportunity to read the submission provided by the Australian Lawyers for Human Rights. We endorse their submission and recommend it to the VLRC.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Liberty Victoria President Jessie Taylor at info@libertyvictoria.vic.gov.au.

Jessie Taylor

President, Liberty Victoria