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Irresponsible Queensland government misleading Senate on Asbestos danger

ACTU is baffled and dismayed by the response from the Queensland Government on Asbestos.

Mr Borowick said the Queensland Government's submission to the Senate committee inquiry into the Asbestos Safety and Eradication Agency Bill put lives at risk by disregarding key messages and recommendations of the Asbestos management review.

The Queensland Government claim a push for the nationwide removal of asbestos by 2030 would see rogue operators removing it, children relocated from their classrooms and patients from their hospital beds.

"Their comments demonstrate a worrying disregard for the dangers of Asbestos. We know that without action the number of victims of the third wave will grow, namely home-removators. This is especially concerning when you consider the extreme weather in the state," said ACTU Assistant Secretary, Michael Borowick.

He said, "Events like Cyclone Yasi and the Brisbane floods saw fibres from buildings dislodged putting thousands of people in danger of contracting Asbestos related cancers. It's very concerning that the Queensland Government had chosen to spread an erroneous and misleading message."

"A government should be informing the public and not misleading them on an issues as important as Asbestos."

"The Queensland Government have signed up to national Asbestos regulations and is aware of the new qualifications of clean up professionals. Yet, they have launched a pre-emptive attack on their professionalism."

"There will be no mass shut down of school rooms and hospital wards as they have suggested."

"Statements like this demonstrate the need for a responsible educational and information campaign. The Queensland Government owes it to the Queensland people to ensure they understand the dangers faced to a third wave of Asbestos victims. We are talking about home renovators and other members of the public who come into contact with deadly Asbestos particles."

Mr Borowick said the ACTU fully supported the Senate inquiry into the Asbestos Safety and Eradication Agency Bill and welcomed the informed and useful submissions from concerned groups. "It's a shame the Queensland Government was not one of them."

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