



New South Wales  
Council for  
Civil Liberties

**NSW COUNCIL FOR CIVIL LIBERTIES**

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## NSWCCL PUBLIC STATEMENT

### Sydney Public Reserves (Public Safety) Bill 2017 (NSW)

The NSWCCL calls for the withdrawal of this extraordinary Bill. It is unwarranted, unnecessary legislation.

It is a harsh response in a context which calls for more responsible, compassionate and sustainable remedies to the serious policy failures of Governments which have left so many people homeless in Sydney.

The existing powers that NSW Police have under LEPR (Part 14) and ) and the Crown Lands Act (Sections 156, 157) are more than adequate to remove persons who present any danger or threat to the public or are engaged in any unlawful activity in Martin Place.

Homeless people sleeping in Martin Place- or other public place- are not acting unlawfully.

This Bill effectively criminalises homelessness. It is a retrograde step, contrary to the move to abolish the crime of vagrancy and other victimless crimes more than 30 years ago.

Homeless people may be causing some level of inconvenience to the public, but some level of inconvenience may be the cost we have to pay for the major homeless problem we have in Sydney.

Inconvenience can be managed more compassionately and responsibly than by rushing to force homeless people out of Martin Place when many will, of necessity, occupy other public space in inner Sydney.

NSWCCL urges the Government to abandon this rash Bill and re-engage with the City of Sydney Council and other agencies to find more sustainable solutions. Homeless people should not be forcibly removed from public spaces until alternative ongoing accommodation is available for them.

The reallocation of the purpose built Sirius building to the current inner city homeless is one obvious part of the longer term solution that could be implemented quickly.

Therese Cochrane  
Secretary  
NSW Council for Civil Liberties

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**Contact in relation to this statement.**

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