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MEDIA RELEASE

CDP SUPPORTS “STRONGER COMMUNITIES”

For immediate circulation

During the Second Reading debates on the Strong Communities Legislation Amendment (Miscellaneous) Bill 2020, the Rev Nile put the case of the CDP in support of the proposed statutory reform. Below is an extract of Rev Nile’s speech extracted from the Parliamentary *Hansard*.

STRONGER COMMUNITIES LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (MISCELLANEOUS) BILL 2020

Reverend the Hon. FRED NILE (23:26:07): On behalf of the Christian Democratic Party, I speak in support of the Stronger Communities Legislation Amendment (Miscellaneous) Bill 2020. I thank the Attorney General for the briefing that he gave to us today. The purpose of the bill is to make amendments to various Acts within the Stronger Communities cluster to address emerging issues, support procedural improvements, clarify uncertainty and correct errors in legislation. The Stronger Communities bills—formerly justice miscellaneous amendment bills—are typically introduced into Parliament each session as part of the Government’s regular legislation review and monitoring campaign. The bill, when passed, will implement 28 amendments to 14 Acts and one regulation in the Stronger Communities cluster, one Act in the Premier and Cabinet cluster, and one Act in the Customer Service cluster. Amendments of note include introducing a legislative presumption in favour of joint trials where a defendant in

criminal proceedings has been accused of multiple offences in which the prosecution is seeking to lead tendency or coincidence evidence.

The bill clarifies that a jury should not be directed as to the standard of proof required in relation to tendency and coincidence evidence. It provides that the offences of distributing intimate images or videos of a complainant without their consent are prescribed sexual offences, meaning that the complainant will be afforded statutory protections when giving evidence, including the closure of the court, the right to appear by video link, the right to have a support person present and the right to not be cross-examined by an unrepresented accused. The Christian Democratic Party particularly supports these changes in the legislation. The bill will enable the court to order that a person found guilty of an offence of threatening to record or distribute an intimate image must remove, retract, recover, destroy or delete the intimate images. We support that revision. Finally, the legislation will clarify that if an inmate is unlawfully absent from a correctional centre because they have failed to enter the correctional centre as required, the inmate's term of imprisonment is extended by the period of the unlawful absence. I commend the bill to the House.

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