



**Nomination for Position on National Committee**

*(Nominations from new members and from all states and territories are encouraged)*

I, **Benedict Joseph Coyne**

.....  
(full name)

of **[Redacted]** (Not for publication)

.....  
(address)

Phone/e-mail **[Redacted]** (Not for publication)/

.....  
(contact details)

nominate for the **Ordinary Member**  
position of:

.....  
(President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, Ordinary Member)

If Ordinary Member, which subcommittee: **Co-Chair Human Rights Act**

of the National Committee of Australian Lawyers for Human Rights Incorporated.

**23 April 2018**

.....  
Signed by nominator (may be nominee)

.....  
Date:

Please set out below a (very short) bio, a brief summary of your reasons for wishing to be elected to the National Committee and describe what you believe you are able to contribute.

If you are nominating for an ordinary member position please outline your experience or expertise in the subcommittee area chosen. Please also outline briefly your plans for the year ahead as chair of the subcommittee:

**Bio:**

I am a human rights lawyer and advocate based at a boutique firm in Brisbane, Executive Counsel at Anderson Fredericks Turners Lawyers & Advocates. I run a national/international human rights advocacy and litigation practice with a wide array of public interest cases. In 2016, I graduated with Distinction (highest award) from a Master of Studies (MSt) in International Human Rights Law (IHRL) at the University of Oxford. In 2010, I graduated from Southern Cross University with first class honours, a University Medal for outstanding academic achievement and various other awards.

In 2014, I was awarded the national Emerging Lawyer of the Year Award by the Australian Lawyer's Alliance and Amnesty International. In the same year, I was awarded two 2014 Southern Cross University Young Alumnus of the Year Awards. In 2013, I initiated and was part of the Baby Ferouz legal team and was awarded the 2015 Australian Lawyers Alliance (Qld) Civil Justice Award for that.

I am frequently published on and invited to speak at various Universities and public events on topical issues in human rights law. In December 2014, I established the national ALHR Human Rights Act subcommittee and over the past 24 months he has been a central part of spearheading the exciting successful campaign for a Queensland Human Rights Act. I am a founder of the international business and human rights consulting group "Synceritas" with a number of my Oxford colleagues. In addition to my ALHR responsibilities I also hold the following extracurricular appointments:

- Member of the Policy Advisory Council of the Grata Fund for Public Interest Litigation;
- Member of the Digital Rights Watch Advisory Council;
- former Board Member of the Australian Earth Laws Alliance (AELA);
- Regional Correspondent (Asia-Pacific) of the Oxford University Human Rights Hub blog.

**Involvement with ALHR**

I have been an ALHR member since 2008 and actively involved since 2012 and I absolutely love it! I was first involved with ALHR as Qld Convenor in 2012 and during subsequent years I became actively and energetically involved in many aspects of ALHR's operations and functions including, but not limited to, the following:

- Submission writing (parliamentary and UN submissions) on a range of different human rights issues;
- Appearing before parliamentary and COAG committees re human rights issues;
- Organising and hosting educational events for the public and legal profession on various human rights issues;
- Actively invigorating the Qld Committee and engaging the ALHR membership from 2012-2015;

- Networking with other organisations to campaign and collaborate on projects of mutual interest, and to co-host educative events for the legal profession and the public;
- In 2013, I was appointed an Ordinary Member of the ALHR National Committee.
- In about December 2014, in alignment with my Masters dissertation topic, I established the ALHR national Human Rights Act subcommittee with a view to reinvigorating the national dialogue and campaign for a federal Human Rights Act. This led to a 2-year campaign for a QLD human rights act co-led by myself and ALHR and which has succeeded in the Qld Government promising to implement a Qld Human Rights Act based on the Victorian charter in the coming months;
- In November 2015, I self-funded a trip to attend Australia's second UPR in Geneva as a representative of ALHR and engaged media coverage and lobbying of politicians and delegates in the process.

### **Reasons for nominating:**

In both April 2016 and April 2017, I nominated for and was appointed ALHR President and it has been an extremely exciting and highly productive, expansive couple of years. It has been a very excellent and exciting couple of years for me and I still want to remain involved in ALHR (including to finish some unfinished business such as implemented a QLD Human Rights Act and a Federal Human Rights Act). However, **now is the time for me to step down from the role of President and implement the succession plan I implemented from April 2016 when I took on the presidency on condition that Kerry Weste become Vice President so that when I stepped down Kerry would become President. I also have a strong belief that institutionally ALHR should ensure that new energy is put into leadership roles and that people should only serve for 2 years maximum as President. The great benefit of ALHR is that it is a very democratic and horizontal organisation and we are a national committee of leaders, so I think it would be good to see the Presidency and Vice President roles shared around the long term national committee members as frequently as possible.**

The following list is my experience of the past couple of years which is by no means exhaustive but a summary of a lot of the excellent and important work that ALHR does:

- Continuing and expanding ALHR's excellent work of drafting submissions on multiple and numerous state/Territory/federal parliamentary inquiries and to UN bodies (incl UN Special Procedures and Special Rapporteurs) – we are now at the point where we receive personal invitations from Federal and State Parliamentary Committees to provide submissions and from Federal Ministers to attend events such as the DFAT Human Rights NGO Roundtable in Canberra.
- Assessing, enhancing and optimising ALHR's governance systems and fundraising activities and various different related projects, proposals and innovations all focused towards optimising ALHR's advocacy impacts and outputs.
- Expanding the national committee to comprise of over 30 people, active committees in every state and territory and 7 national thematic subcommittees as follows:
  - Disability Rights Subcommittee
  - Refugee Rights Subcommittees
  - Indigenous Rights Subcommittee
  - Human Rights Act Subcommittee
  - Women & Girls' Rights Subcommittee

- Freedoms Subcommittee
- Business & Human Rights Subcommittee
- Engaging ALHR's first ever professional media manager for a 6-month trial which has paid off in spades with amazing prime time media exposure (ABC RN AM/PM, Channel 10 *The Project*) SBS Radio) and consistent local, regional, national and international media exposure (radio, print, TV) thereby amplifying ALHR's advocacy impact on important human rights issues in Australia and abroad.
- Co-organising, overseeing and hosting ALHR's inaugural national human rights conference and La Trobe University Law School's City Campus in Melbourne which was a raging success on multiple fronts.
- Travelling to numerous governmental and NGO events around Queensland and Australia to represent ALHR including:
  - 2016 Australian Progress National Leadership Conference (2 days) at Old Parliament House Canberra;
  - 2016 La Trobe University Human Rights Advocacy Course guest lecture;
  - 2016 James Cook University Legal Studies Conference (Human Rights Keynote to 300 students from 30 high schools);
  - 2016 Qld Parliament Panel on Decriminalising Abortion – panel speaker;
  - 2016 Chair of Politicians Panel at Qld Parliament for Decriminalising Abortion;
  - 2016 Michael Kirby Lecture Series Dinner Speech at Southern Cross University;
  - 2016 *Hard to Believe* Documentary Premiere Panel Speaker;
  - 2016 Guest Speaker at Amnesty International Qld Chapter on Decriminalising Abortion;
  - 2017 Law Council of Australia Death Penalty Abolition Symposium (invite only) Melbourne;
  - 2017 DFAT Human Rights NGO Roundtable, National Museum Canberra;
  - 2017 Keynote Speaker at Griffith University & Qld Advocacy Incorporated "Walk the Talk" Disability Rights Conference at Brisbane Convention Centre (with Alistair McEwin, Ed Santow and Kevin Cocks AO).
  - 2017 Keynote Speaker Environment & Law Association NSW Conference
  - 2017 – numerous other events and media engagements
  - 2018 – ALHR delegate at Federal AG civil society Human Rights NGO Roundtable at AHRC
  - 2018 – ALHR delegate at DFAT Human Rights NGO Roundtable, National Museum Canberra

ALHR has now launched a campaign for a WA Human Rights Act and we are actively supporting the campaign for a Tasmanian Human Rights Act. We will also be initiating a campaign for a NSW human rights act and continuing to reinvigorate the campaign and dialogue around the urgent need for a federal human rights act.

I am extremely grateful for the opportunity of being able to work with such an excellent, inspiring, diligent and dedicated ALHR team with such a wonderful wealth of expertise and generous capacity for involvement in progressing, promoting, protecting and enhancing the indispensably important basic rights and fundamental freedoms of all Australians and future generations of Australians.

**If re-elected to the position of ALHR president I will remain dedicated to advancing and implementing initiatives which deliver:**

- The resources needed for ALHR to become a leading legal voice in human rights discourse in

Australia;

- Progression of beneficial relationships with organisations and individuals such as that offered via the creation of our secretariat and Human Rights Advocacy subject at La Trobe University Law School
- Timely reactions to human rights issues as they arise;
- Growth in ALHR's membership numbers;
- Value-added professional development for our membership;
- Progress toward ALHR's medium and long-term strategic goals, such as a greater focus on more consistent communication with members of parliament and a greater media presence, greater involvement in United Nations complaints mechanisms and an increased presence at international human rights forums.
- Implementing a number of exciting innovative strategies currently in the works for repopularising human right within the national psyche and consciousness of Australia;
- Progressing and pursuing ALHR co-led campaigns for human rights acts in Western Australia, Tasmania, New South Wales and federally.
- Attention to the continued monitoring and strengthening of ALHR's governance.

If you have any queries about the roles and responsibilities of office bearers and committee members, contact the current ALHR executive on

[secretary@alhr.org.au](mailto:secretary@alhr.org.au)

**Completed Nominations must be delivered to:**

By post: Secretary, ALHR  
PO Box A147  
Sydney South  
NSW 1235

By e-mail  
(as a pdf):

[secretary@alhr.org.au](mailto:secretary@alhr.org.au)