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Welcome move by government to bring Australia closer to a permanent digital business plan

The Law Council of Australia applauds the government's commitment to a digital plan that will remove outdated regulatory barriers to doing business.

This includes improving the ability to undertake the witnessing and signing of crucial documents as well as filing or registering documents with governmental and regulatory agencies electronically.

Law Council President, Ms Pauline Wright, said that the government's investment in a Digital Business Plan is a win for consumers and business.

"There is no doubt that the COVID-19 crisis has forced a rethink of how technological solutions can be embraced to ensure that corporations can continue to conduct business despite social distancing measures," Ms Wright said.

"And there are significant, positive opportunities arising from the modernisation of corporations law."

"This includes the potential for greater access and reduced costs, with companies being able to hold virtual meetings and executing documents electronically," Ms Wright said.

The Law Council looks forward to working with government in the implementation of the Digital Business Plan, as the country moves forward following the pandemic crisis. The Law Council will seek to ensure that appropriate safeguards will be embedded in the legislation, to protect those who may be vulnerable to exploitation or fraud in an online setting.

"The temporary measures that were introduced by the government recognised the critical role of technology enablers in supporting the continued operation of businesses and other entities throughout the COVID-19 pandemic," Ms Wright said.

"It is clear that the Australian Government has recognised how important it is that the gains derived from these measures are not lost as we look to life beyond the pandemic."

"The Law Council will continue to advocate for the harmonisation, where appropriate, of processes for e-signature and similar activities across the country."

"A national approach will remove the current inconsistency between jurisdictions and remove any uncertainty for consumers and business," Ms Wright said.

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