

**In the matter of the *Commissions of Inquiry Act 1950***  
**Commissions of Inquiry Order (No.4) 2015**  
**Barrett Adolescent Centre Commission of Inquiry**

**AFFIDAVIT**

Darren Bate of Barrett Adolescent Centre Special School, Teacher's Aide, solemnly and sincerely affirms and declares:

**Background and experience**

1. I make this affidavit with its attached documentary exhibits in compliance with the Notices respectively entitled "Requirement to give information in a written statement" and "Requirement to produce documents" dated 30 October, 2015 and issued under the hand of the Honourable Margaret Wilson QC, Commissioner of the Barrett Adolescent Centre Commission of Inquiry.
2. I am currently employed as a teacher's aide at the Barrett Adolescent Centre Special School and have worked in this role for 16 years. I do not have a curriculum vitae or resume. I left school in 1977 when I was halfway through year 11, and from then, worked in a number of fields including as a disability support officer for two and a half years and as a voluntary literacy tutor, before joining the Barrett Adolescent Centre Special School.
3. I have no formal qualifications for this role or in the area of special needs teaching apart from the experience referred to in paragraph 2.

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Deponent  
**AFFIDAVIT**  
On behalf of the State of Queensland

~~A.J.P., C. Dec.~~, Solicitor  
McInnes Wilson Lawyers  
Level 23  
345 Queen Street  
BRISBANE QLD 4000  
TEL: [REDACTED]  
Email: [REDACTED]

**Involvement with the Barrett Adolescent Centre Special School**

4. I heard about a teacher's aide job at Barrett Adolescent Centre Special School from my friend Jill Medew, who worked at the school. I wrote a letter to the principal at the end of January 2000 applying for a job as a teacher's aide. **Exhibit A** to this affidavit is a copy of my letter to the principal dated 30 January 2000. On 16 February 2000 I received a welcome letter from Education Queensland. **Exhibit B** to this affidavit is a copy of the letter from the Principal Personnel Officer, Education Queensland to the Principal of the Barrett Adolescent Centre Special School and myself dated 16 February 2000.
5. I started at Barrett Adolescent Centre Special School on 11 February 2000 working part-time, one day per week. By 2004, I had increased to 2 and a half days per week and was also working 2 days per week at Lowood State High School Special Education Unit, also as a teacher's aide, supporting students with various needs. By 2007, I recall I had stopped working at Lowood State High School, and was employed only at Barrett, working a nine day fortnight.
6. When the Barrett Adolescent Centre Special School was located at Wacol my duties were to be an aide in the school classes, to film and edit the yearly drama class' video production, and to work alongside the allied health staff in the non-academic programs with students. The non-academic programs included 'adventure therapy' in activities like rock climbing and high ropes courses, assist in organising camps twice a year, 'community access' which included visiting cafes to improve social skills, and riding mountain bikes, I also assisted in the 'mindfulness program' of cognitive behavioural therapy from the centre's psychologists. This was mandatory for all students and involved learning techniques such as emotional regulation. As

students and involved learning techniques such as emotional regulation. As necessary I wrote in the students' clinical files to advise clinical staff of what had occurred during the school day or off campus activities.

7. Since the Barrett Adolescent Centre Special School was moved to Yeronga, and more recently to its current location at Tennyson, my duties are now limited to classroom support of students, supervising students during morning exercise and during breaks. I have taken students to hospital, appointments, (base) home schools and work experience in the school car or in my own vehicle on occasions.
8. I report directly to the Principal at Barrett Adolescent Centre Special School. I am not assigned to a teacher. I view my role as being a support to students. I do not and never have supervised any other staff members.
9. The teaching program when the Barrett Adolescent Centre Special School was located at Wacol was different. Back then the students were enrolled at the Centre School, and worked through Tafe certificates, distance education programs, or through work from their home school. Students would also participate in Art, Drama, Music, Cooking and Gardening as well as their academic work. At Yeronga, and at the current location at Tennyson, the curriculum is similar, and students are enrolled in the One School system at the Barrett School for a .1 enrolment in addition to a 1.0 enrolment at their home school.
10. When the Barrett Adolescent Centre Special School was at Wacol, I felt that there was really no difference in the levels of staff – we were all equal, our opinions, thoughts and views were heard and valued. The school staff hierarchy has remained the same throughout my time at the Barrett Adolescent Centre Special School.
11. At Tennyson the school staff consists of:

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- (a) The acting Principal, Deb Rankin;
  - (b) Two full time teachers, Steve Marriott and Janine Armitage. Mr Marriott is the most senior staff member after the Principal and acts in that role when the Principal is absent.
  - (c) One full time teacher aide, Elaine Raisin;
  - (d) Part time teachers:
    - (i) Daniel Goodall, who previously did supply teaching when the School was at Wacol;
    - (ii) Sue Cassidy, who teaches English and does outreach with students who do not physically attend the School;
    - (iii) Louise Dornan, who teaches one or two days a week;
    - (iv) Margaret Nightingale, who was a teacher aide at the School while she studied teaching; and
    - (v) Elizabeth Marlay, who teaches drama;
  - (e) Part time teacher aides, Megan Vizzard and John Morahan; and
  - (f) One administration officer, Serena Marriott.
  - (g) One part time guidance officer, Dianne Wallace.
12. When the school was located at Wacol there was open communication and constant engagement with health staff. We had morning and afternoon handover meetings with the health staff so that all staff were aware of the students' current condition and state of mind. Allied health offices were in the school building, so appointments could and did take place during school hours.
13. At Yeronga and at Tennyson there are no medical staff on site. We have no formal or immediate way to find out what is happening with the students' psychiatric or

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Deponent  
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psychological care. We try to check in with parents or carers when they drop off their children to school, but a number of students are brought to school by taxi. Teaching staff have a debriefing meeting every day after the students return home so that all staff are aware of the events of the day.

14. The learning program for each student has always been tailored. Each student would have a Negotiated Education Program, prepared for them once the school was informed of the student's school history. The school has used the COMPASS test on several students to determine their level of literacy and numeracy.
15. When the Barrett Adolescent Centre Special School was at Wacol the students were broken into class groups of no more than six children. There was three groups, with one classroom teacher and one or two aides in each class, depending on the class. A nurse would also attend classes. Some classes, such as cooking, gardening and science require greater involvement of aides. The timetable was dictated by the workings of the medical ward, and classes would last half an hour. The day was generally as follows:
  - (a) 9:30am – morning exercise. We would usually ride bikes or walk around The Park for half an hour.
  - (b) 10:00am – morning tea at the ward.
  - (c) 10:15am – first morning lesson.
  - (d) 10:45am – short break. During breaks some students would go back to the ward to see clinical staff.
  - (e) 11:00am – two half hour lessons back to back.
  - (f) 12:00pm – lunch at the ward.
  - (g) 1:00pm – lesson 4.

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~~A.J.P., C. Dec., Solicitor~~

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- (h) 1:30pm – break at the ward.
  - (i) 1:45pm – lesson 5.
  - (j) 2:15pm – break at the ward.
  - (k) 2:30pm – lesson 6.
  - (l) 3:00pm – school day finishes.
16. At times, during the afternoon breaks, some students would choose to stay in classes, with approval from teachers and nurses.
17. At Yeronga and now at Tennyson there are more staff and fewer children. In a class there is an average of six students, two teachers and three aides, depending on the student level, dynamics or subject. I continue to aide in all subjects. The timetable is generally as follows:
- (a) 9:30am – morning exercise. We try to go for a walk near the school or play games on school grounds.
  - (b) 10:00am – morning tea.
  - (c) 10:15am – first morning class.
  - (d) 11:00am – short break.
  - (e) 11:15am – second morning class.
  - (f) 12:00pm – lunch.
  - (g) 1:00pm to whenever the children are picked up, usually by 2:30pm. We offer a short break around 1.45pm.
  - (h) 2:30pm – staff meeting.
18. At Wacol, we invited families to attend for awards days, and the Principal arranged parent/teacher evenings. At Yeronga and now at Tennyson, we try to speak to parents when they drop their children off at the school. Class teachers speak to

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parents by telephone and email. At Wacol, Yeronga and now at Tennyson each student is assigned to a single teacher, even the outreach students. I only have informal interactions with parents, telling them of the day their child has had and generally don't discuss curriculum with them.

19. The key challenge in my role at the Barrett Adolescent Centre Special School has been the stress that comes from dealing with the students mental health conditions and witnessing their turmoil. I have witnessed students attempting to harm themselves or others. At Wacol we could use an optional duress button and the security and response teams would respond. I didn't wear the duress button, as I thought that it promoted a prison-like environment. Since leaving Wacol, there have been equally as serious incidents, and on at least one occasion, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Sometimes, one student can need 3 or 4 staff to support their crisis. Our backups are the police and ambulance.

**Decision to close the Barrett Adolescent Centre and transition arrangements**

20. On 8 November 2012, we had our Quadrennial Review offsite. That review was extremely positive and the School's future seemed secure. However, when we returned to our school, Serena Marriott received a phone call from a member of the media asking whether staff were aware of the potential closure of the Barrett Adolescent Centre, after comments made by Brett McDermott in his evidence at the Child Protection Commission of Inquiry.
21. The next six months were tumultuous, with the students and the wider school community trying to stop the closure of the Centre.
22. I personally wrote to a number of politicians voicing my support for the continuation of the Barrett Adolescent Centre and the School. Those politicians were:

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- (a) the Hon Anastacia Palaszczuk, then Opposition Leader;
  - (b) the Hon Lawrence Springborg MP, then Minister for Health;
  - (c) the Hon Campbell Newman MP, then Premier;
  - (d) the Hon John-Paul Langbroek MP, then Minister for Education, Training and Employment;
  - (e) the Hon Tanya Plibersek MP, then federal Minister for Health; and
  - (f) Mr Bernie Ripoll MP, the federal Member for Oxley and the Barrett Adolescent Centre's local MP.
23. **Exhibit C** to this affidavit is a copy of the email I sent to the Hon Anastacia Palaszczuk MP in November 2012.
24. **Exhibit D** to this affidavit is a copy of the letter I sent to Hon Lawrence Springborg MP by email on 13 November 2012.
25. **Exhibit E** to this affidavit is a copy of the letter I sent to the Hon Campbell Newman MP by email on 13 November 2012.
26. **Exhibit F** to this affidavit is a copy of the letter I sent to the Hon John-Paul Langbroek MP by email on 13 November 2012.
27. **Exhibit G** to this affidavit is a copy of the letter I sent to the Hon Tanya Plibersek MP by email on 13 November 2012.
28. **Exhibit H** to this affidavit is a copy of the letter I sent to Mr Bernie Ripoll MP by email on 13 November 2012.
29. We had a visit from Hon Anastacia Palaszczuk, then the Opposition Leader and Lawrence Springborg, then the Minister for Health, after I wrote to them both, but I presume not directly because of my letters, as many, many people were voicing their opposition to the closure.

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~~A.J.P., C. Dee~~, Solicitor



30. On 6 August 2013, there was an official announcement that the Barrett Adolescent Centre would close. I do not recall whether we were officially informed of the closure or the reasons for the closure. I have no records or correspondence regarding the announcement in my possession. I do recall that there was speculation amongst staff as to the reasons for closure.
31. At no time was I consulted in regards to the closure decision, nor the transition arrangements for the students' education or clinical needs.
32. I recall that after the announcement on 6 August 2013 the students withdrew from learning. Comments from the students like "what's the point?" were frequent and so were many tears. Our classes went from having the students engaged in academic learning, to more activity based classes. I recall that it was hard to make the Barrett Adolescent Centre a good place for the students after the closure announcement.
33. Mr Peter Blatch, Assistant Regional Director, School Performance Metropolitan Special and Specific Purpose, Department of Education, visited the school after the decision to close and gave us hope that the Barrett Adolescent Centre Special School would continue to exist after the Centre at Wacol closed. Mr Blatch would meet individually with the then Principal, Kevin Rogers, and also with staff a couple of times a term in the closure period. Mr Blatch continued visiting us when the school was at Yeronga.
34. I met with my union, United Voice, regarding job security. I was informed by my then union representative, that as a permanent employee, I would have a job at another school or schools, if the Barrett Adolescent Centre Special School closed.

35. After the comments at the 2012 hearing of the Child Protection Commission of Inquiry our music teacher left his part time role at our school at the end of that year due to the uncertainty of our school's future.
36. I recall that there was a feeling at the Barrett Adolescent Centre that you couldn't speak about the decision to close. It appeared to me that there was a divide in the staff between the group that was loyal to Queensland Health and those who were fighting for the Centre to remain open.
37. After Dr Trevor Sadler was removed, it felt like our leader was taken away. I certainly began to doubt and lose trust in the decision making after that. The number of Allied Health staff dwindled as they sought permanent placements elsewhere and were not replaced. This had a noticeable detrimental effect on the students. The nursing staff were gradually replaced with casuals, resulting in a lack of continuity for the students.
38. After the announcement to close, a parent arranged for a small group of parents and teacher aides to meet with the Mental Health Commissioner, Dr Lesley van Schoubroeck. I recall arranging to have the day off, but on that morning I was told by the parent who arranged the meeting that the names of attendees would be recorded and that the parent had been told that staff should 'remember who they work for'. I took those comments as a threat, and chose not to attend the meeting.

**Relocation to Yeronga**

39. I cannot recall how I learned that the Barrett Adolescent Centre Special School would be moved to Yeronga. I remember that we visited Yeronga when it was a potential option. I had the feeling that we would be part of the Yeronga school community, but that didn't happen because of how sick our students were. I was not told why Yeronga was chosen.

40. I assisted in packing up the school material from Wacol to be taken to Yeronga.

41. [REDACTED]

42. At Yeronga, the Barrett Adolescent Centre Special School was able to maintain the same level of education with students. As we were unable to liaise closely with their new medical care teams, it was difficult to be part of their mental health care.

43. I recall that a 'post-suicide support' team from Headspace was arranged to visit us at Yeronga. I don't recall who arranged their visit. I recall that I attended a group session with the Headspace team once or twice during term 4 in 2014, during my graduated return to work. I was seeing a private Psychologist at the time, and I felt that the Headspace team did not help me much. I recall that a Senior Guidance Officer was brought into the school [REDACTED] to contact past students and their families and inform them [REDACTED]

44. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] *Personal information removed from website at request of individual*

45. I cannot recall how I learned that the Barrett Adolescent Centre Special School would be moved to Tennyson. I recall in mid-2014 that I visited and worked as a teacher's aide at the campus along with other staff members to get a feel for it. I do not know why the Tennyson campus was chosen.
46. At Tennyson, we have our students on a daily basis, and Tennyson Special School students attend on a Wednesday. We have to keep our students separated from the Tennyson students.

**Current School at Tennyson**

47. The current school is similar to the school at Wacol, in that the students are similar. It is more of a struggle with students, as we often have no direct knowledge of how their treatment is progressing. The teaching is entirely curriculum based, rather than the mix of treatment, activities and curriculum we had at Wacol.
48. I feel like there is more pressure from the Department of Education and Training to follow departmental processes. For example, in the last term we were told to start using One School, to enrol students and maintain incident records. I feel that the higher level of the Education Department doesn't realise how sick our students actually are.
49. To attend our school, the student needs a referral from their mental health professional, be it a private psychologist, CYMHS or a psychiatrist. The Principal and Guidance Officer will then determine whether the student can be enrolled. There are currently [REDACTED] including outreach students. Their ages are between 14 and 18 years, [REDACTED]
50. The Tennyson campus is not suitable for a 'Barrett' style school. The campus is too confined and congested. It is located between a grain mill and a road heavily

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trafficked by trucks. We have to work with the air-conditioning on and classroom doors shut due to the noise from outside the school. I feel that the location at Wacol was more calm and healing to students.

**General**

51. **Exhibit J** to this affidavit is a personal reflection of how the closure has affected me personally.

All the facts affirmed in this affidavit are true to my knowledge and belief except as stated otherwise.

Affirmed by Darren Bate on 13  
November 2015 at Tennyson in the  
presence of:

)  
)  
)

[Redacted signature area]

~~A Justice of the Peace, G. Dec.,~~  
Solicitor

**In the matter of the *Commissions of Inquiry Act 1950***

**Commissions of Inquiry Order (No.4) 2015**

**Barrett Adolescent Centre Commission of Inquiry**

**CERTIFICATE OF EXHIBIT**

Exhibits A to J to the Affidavit of Darren Bate affirmed on 13 November 2015

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Deponent






  
~~A.J.P., C.Dec.~~, Solicitor

**In the matter of the *Commissions of Inquiry Act 1950***

**Commissions of Inquiry Order (No.4) 2015**

**Barrett Adolescent Centre Commission of Inquiry**

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30 JANUARY, 2000

THE PRINCIPAL  
BARRET ADOLESCENT CENTRE  
SPECIAL SCHOOL

DEAR SIR

I AM WRITING TO APPLY FOR THE NEW "TEACHER'S AIDE" POSITION. HAVING HAD SOME EXPERIENCE IN THE DISABILITY FIELD, I FEEL THAT I COULD ADAPT TO THE ROLE REQUIRED.

I WAS EMPLOYED AS A DISABILITY SUPPORT OFFICER FROM 1992 TILL THE END OF 1994 WITH THE IPSWICH WORKERS COMMUNITY CO-OPERATIVE. THIS POSITION REQUIRED THE SUPPORTING AND TRAINING OF CLIENTS WITH VARYING PHYSICAL, MENTAL AND EMOTIONAL DISABILITIES IN DIFFERENT WORK PROGRAMMES. ALTHOUGH SOMETIMES QUITE DEMANDING, I FOUND THE WORK VERY REWARDING.

THIS LAST YEAR HAS PROVEN ASOMEWHAT DIFFICULT ONE FOR MYSELF, HAVING BEEN DIAGNOSED WITH SECONDARY MELANOMA CANCER, WITH SOME ON-GOING SURGERY BEING NEEDED. AS THIS TYPE OF ILLNESS CAN SOMETIMES BE DIFFICULT TO OVERCOME THE MINIMAL HOURS WITH THIS NEW POSITION WOULD BE VERY SUITABLE.

TOWARDS THE END OF 1999 I UNDERTOOK TRAINING

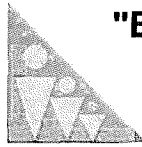
EXHIBIT 20  
TO BECOME A VOLUNTARY LITERACY TUTOR, WHICH WILL INVOLVE TUTORING A FEW HOURS A WEEK ONCE I HAVE BEEN MATCHED WITH A SUITABLE STUDENT FROM THE PROGRAMME. AS MY COMPUTER SKILLS ARE A LITTLE LACKING, I WILL BE RECEIVING SOME TRAINING AS A NEED FOR MY VOLUNTARY TUTORING. I FEEL THIS WILL BE OF SOME BENEFIT FOR THE TEACHER'S AIDE POSITION.

I AM 38 YEARS OLD, MARRIED, WITH NO CHILDREN AND HAVE LIVED IN THE BRISBANE VALLEY ALL OF MY LIFE. I HAVE WORKED AND TRAVELLED ALL THROUGHOUT AUSTRALIA AND HAVE BACK-PACKED THROUGH MANY COUNTRIES OF THE WORLD. BESIDES TRAVEL, THE OUTDOORS AND NATURE ARE MY MAIN INTERESTS, AS WELL AS YOGA, COOKING, AND DIFFERENT CULTURES.

IF A REFEREE IS NEEDED PLEASE DON'T HESITATE TO CALL LES MIRECKI AT FAMILY SERVICES IPSWICH OFFICE OR I COULD PROVIDE A REFERENCE FROM HIM OR OTHERS IF PREFERRED.

YOURS SINCERELY,

DARREN BATE



Reference: 5110951

16 February 2000

**Copy For**  
Principal  
Barrett Adolescent Centre Special School  
Orford Drive  
WACOL QLD 4076

BARRETT ADOLESCENT  
CENTRE SCHOOL

8 MAR 2000

MAIL RECEIVED

Mr Darren Mark Bate  
Barrett Adolescent Centre Special School  
Orford Drive  
WACOL QLD 4076

Through the Principal

Dear Mr Bate

Welcome to Education Queensland. You have been appointed to Barrett Adolescent Centre Special School as a temporary part-time Teacher Aide, to commence duty on 11 February 2000. Unless otherwise advised this engagement will cease on 30 June 2000. Your hours of duty will be 11 hours per fortnight.

Barrett Adolescent Centre Special School is located at Orford Drive, Wacol, Phone [redacted]

[redacted] If you require any clarification or advice with regard to your appointment please contact the Principal, at the above address, or this office.

Your general conditions of employment are detailed in the 'Conditions of Employment' enclosure.

Confirmation of your salary classification will appear on your fortnightly pay advice. In order to ensure the prompt payment of your salary, please arrange with your Principal to complete a Commencement Advice Form on your first day of duty.

Due to the nature of your appointment I confirm that you are not eligible to claim reimbursement of your appointment expenses.

I trust you find your role with Education Queensland to be fulfilling and enjoyable.

Yours sincerely

Principal Personnel Officer

Enc  
CC Principal, Barrett Adolescent Centre Special School

Hi Anastacia...

As a employee of the Barrett Adolescent Centre School (13yrs) I along with all of my colleagues were totally shocked to hear the news of the centre's closure anounced last Thursday...

Link...

<http://www.news.com.au/national/queensland-child-protection-inquiry-told-barrett-adolescent-centre-school-is-to-close/story-fndo4ckr-1226513065384>

...especially, as we were firstly notified by the media asking for comments after the above leak!!!...we had no other warning!!!

This was followed by the story headlining the ABC 7.00pm news that night

Link...

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2012-11-08/qld-adolescent-mental-health-facility-to-close/4361960?section=qld>

I won't talk to much more about it in this email...as I really feel we need to speak in person...there being so much to discuss regarding this "cost-cutting, number- crunching, ridiculous" decision by the Government.

I know you are aware of our centre and the type of service that we have provided over the last 30 years, as I have actually met you at the Wacol railway station earlier this year when we staff and some of our students attended the "positive pARTnerships" unveiling, in which our students had participated.

An online petition was initiated on Friday afternoon by a lady who has no links to the Centre but felt outraged by the decision, learnt through the media coverage.

The campaign is on a site called **communityrun** and as I write this email, has attracted **1,382 signatures** since Friday afternoon... which I think is amazing!!!

Please have a look

Link...

<http://www.communityrun.org/petitions/don-t-close-the-barratt-centre-for-adolescents-with-severe-mental-health-issues>

Could you please find out what is happening and give us staff and a lot of very concerned adolescents who definately do not need this upheaval, some clarification on this yet another cruel, unfair Government decision.

I have attached the photo of you at the Wacol station art launch with some of our students' artwork behind.

I look forward to your reply

Regards

Darren Bate




Mr Darren Bate



13 November 2012

Hon Lawrence Springborg MP  
Minister for Health  
GPO Box 48  
Brisbane Qld 4001



Dear Minister

**Proposed closure of the Barrett Centre**

As an employee at the Barrett Centre, I wish to draw to your attention to the proposed closure of this important facility.

The Barrett Adolescent Centre School has operated in the adolescent ward of the Park Centre for Mental Health at Wacol for 30 years. It is an inpatient Adolescent Psychiatry Unit where young people with severe mental health issues have access to treatment and services, including important learning and vocational opportunities.

As you may be aware, in his evidence at the Child Protection Commission of Inquiry, Dr Brett McDermott, executive director of the Mater Child and Youth Mental Health Service indicated that the Barrett Centre would be closed in December.

The school was contacted by media outlets on Thursday afternoon and told that a decision had been taken by the Government to close the Barrett Centre. Subsequently, we have seen media reports that the West Moreton Hospital and Health Service has indicated that a final decision to close the facility has not been taken.

However, to date, the school, staff or students have had no official contact from the Department to indicate the future of our centre or the service we provide.

Students, parents and staff at the school are very distressed - not only at the prospect of the closure of the school, but also the manner in which this information has been transmitted and the lack of an apparent plan for continuation of this vital service.

The way that this process has been conducted is unacceptable and has caused extreme distress to vulnerable young people and their families.

Rumours of the closure of the Barrett Centre have also concerned the local community. To date, almost 3000 people have signed an online petition which was initiated by a member of the community over the weekend.

It is vital that, as Minister, you ensure that the young people, staff and families associated with the Barrett Centre have some certainty and security around any decisions that may have been taken or may be taken in the future in relation to this facility.

The Barrett Centre plays a critical role in the health, safety and recovery of children and young people at risk. The way that this process has been conducted indicates that the health of these young people and the future of the staff is not a priority for your Government.

If you would like to discuss this matter with me, please contact me on the details above.

Yours sincerely

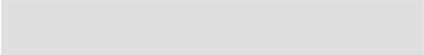
Darren Bate

Mr Darren Bate



13 November 2012

Hon Campbell Newman MP  
Premier of Queensland  
PO Box 15185  
City East  
Queensland 4002



Dear Premier

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However, to date, the school, staff or students have had no official contact from the Department to indicate the future of our centre or the service we provide.

Students, parents and staff at the school are very distressed - not only at the prospect of the closure of the school, but also the manner in which this information has been transmitted and the lack of an apparent plan for continuation of this vital service.

The way that this process has been conducted is unacceptable and has caused extreme distress to vulnerable young people and their families.

Rumours of the closure of the Barrett Centre have also concerned the local community. To date, almost 3000 people have signed an online petition which was initiated by a member of the community over the weekend.

It is vital that, as Premier, you ensure that the young people, staff and families associated with the Barrett Centre have some certainty and security around any decisions that may have been taken or may be taken in the future in relation to this facility.

The Barrett Centre plays a critical role in the health, safety and recovery of children and young people at risk. The way that this process has been conducted indicates that the health of these young people and the future of the staff is not a priority for your Government.

If you would like to discuss this matter with me, please contact me on the details above.

Yours sincerely

Darren Bate

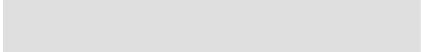


Mr Darren Bate



13 November 2012

Hon John-Paul Langbroek MP  
Minister for Education, Training and Employment  
PO Box 15033, City East QLD 4002



Dear Minister

**Proposed closure of the Barrett Centre**

As an employee at the Barrett Centre, I wish to draw to your attention to the proposed closure of this important facility.

The Barrett Adolescent Centre School, an Education Queensland school, has operated in the adolescent ward of the Park Centre for Mental Health at Wacol for 30 years. It is an inpatient Adolescent Psychiatry Unit where young people with severe mental health issues have access to treatment and services, including important learning and vocational opportunities.

As you may be aware, in his evidence at the Child Protection Commission of Inquiry, Dr Brett McDermott, executive director of the Mater Child and Youth Mental Health Service indicated that the Barrett Centre would be closed in December.

The school was contacted by media outlets on Thursday afternoon and told that a decision had been taken by the Government to close the Barrett Centre. Subsequently, we have seen media reports that the West Moreton Hospital and Health Service has indicated that a final decision to close the facility has not been taken.

However, to date, the school, staff or students have had no official contact from the Department to indicate the future of our centre or the service we provide.

Students, parents and staff at the school are very distressed - not only at the prospect of the closure of the school, but also the manner in which this information has been transmitted and the lack of an apparent plan for continuation of this vital service.

The way that this process has been conducted is unacceptable and has caused extreme distress to vulnerable young people and their families.

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It is vital that, as Minister, you ensure that the young people, staff and families associated with the Barrett Centre have some certainty and security around any decisions that may have been taken or may be taken in the future in relation to this facility.

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Yours sincerely

Darren Bate

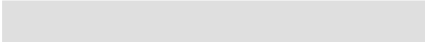
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Mr Darren Bate



13 November 2012

Hon Tanya Plibersek MP  
Federal Minister for Health  
PO Box 6022  
House of Representatives  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600



Dear Minister

**Proposed closure of the Barrett Centre, teen mental health facility, by Queensland Health**

As an employee at the Barrett Centre, I wish to draw to your attention to the proposed closure of this important youth mental health facility by the Queensland Government.

The Barrett Adolescent Centre School has operated in the adolescent ward of the Park Centre for Mental Health at Wacol for 30 years. It is an inpatient Adolescent Psychiatry Unit where young people with severe mental health issues have access to treatment and services, including important learning and vocational opportunities. It is the only one of its kind in Queensland and it is a model that has been replicated in other States.

While giving evidence at the Child Protection Commission of Inquiry, Dr Brett McDermott, executive director of the Mater Child and Youth Mental Health Service, indicated that the Barrett Centre would be closed in December 2012.

Our school, our staff and our students had previously not been advised by any Government department or Minister that this was occurring. We had no idea. We had to be told by the media.

Students, parents and staff at the school are very distressed - not only at the prospect of the closure of the school, but also the manner in which this information has been transmitted and the lack of an apparent plan for continuation of this vital service.

The way that this process has been conducted is unacceptable and has caused extreme distress to vulnerable young people and their families. Rumours of the closure of the Barrett Centre have also concerned the local community. To date, almost 3000 people have signed an online petition which was initiated by a member of the community over the weekend. The petition can be found at:

<http://www.communityrun.org/petitions/don-t-close-the-barratt-centre-for-adolescents-with-severe-mental-health-issues>

I would appreciate your support to call on the Queensland Government to provide information, support and continuing service to vulnerable young people.

The way that this process has been conducted indicates that the health of young people and the future of the staff is not a priority for the Newman Government.

I look forward to your assistance on this important issue. If your office would like further information or would like to discuss this matter with me, please contact me on the details above.

Yours sincerely


Darren Bate

Mr Darren Bate



13 November 2012

Mr Bernie Ripoll MP  
Federal Member for Oxley  
PO Box 4042  
Forest Lake Q 4078



Dear Bernie

**Proposed closure of the Barrett Centre**

As an employee at the Barrett Centre, I wish to draw to your attention to the proposed closure of this important facility by the Queensland Government.

As you know, the Barrett Adolescent Centre School has operated in the adolescent ward of the Park Centre for Mental Health at Wacol for 30 years. It is an inpatient Adolescent Psychiatry Unit where young people with severe mental health issues have access to treatment and services, including important learning and vocational opportunities. It is the only one of its kind in Queensland and it is a model that has been replicated in other States.

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I would appreciate your help and the help of your office to promote this petition and to lobby relevant decision makers.

The Barrett Centre plays a critical role in the health, safety and recovery of children and young people at risk. The way that this process has been conducted indicates that the health of these young people and the future of the staff is not a priority for the Newman Government.

I look forward to your assistance on this important issue. If you would like to discuss this matter with me, please contact me on the details above.

Yours sincerely

Darren Bate



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Department of Justice and Attorney-General

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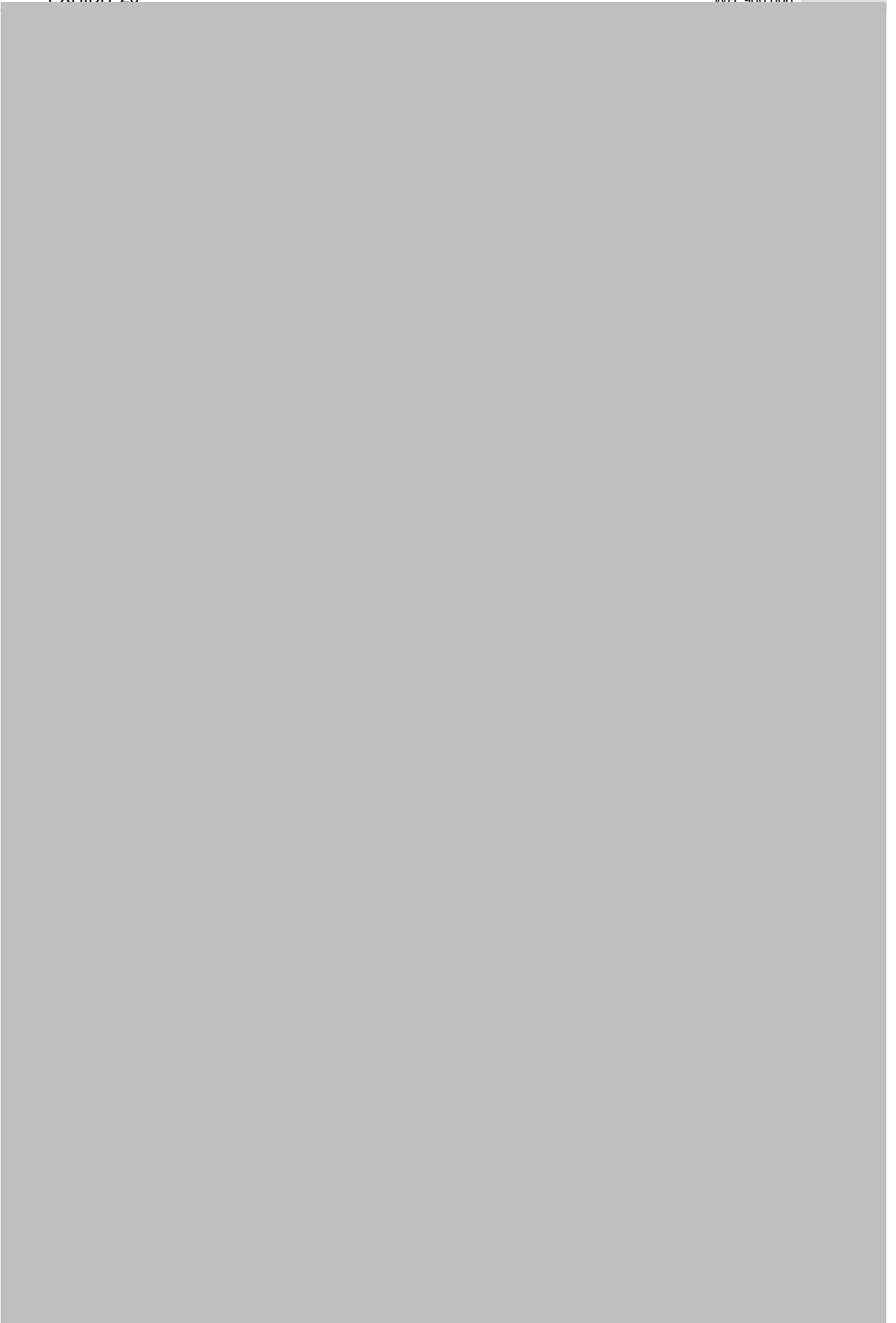
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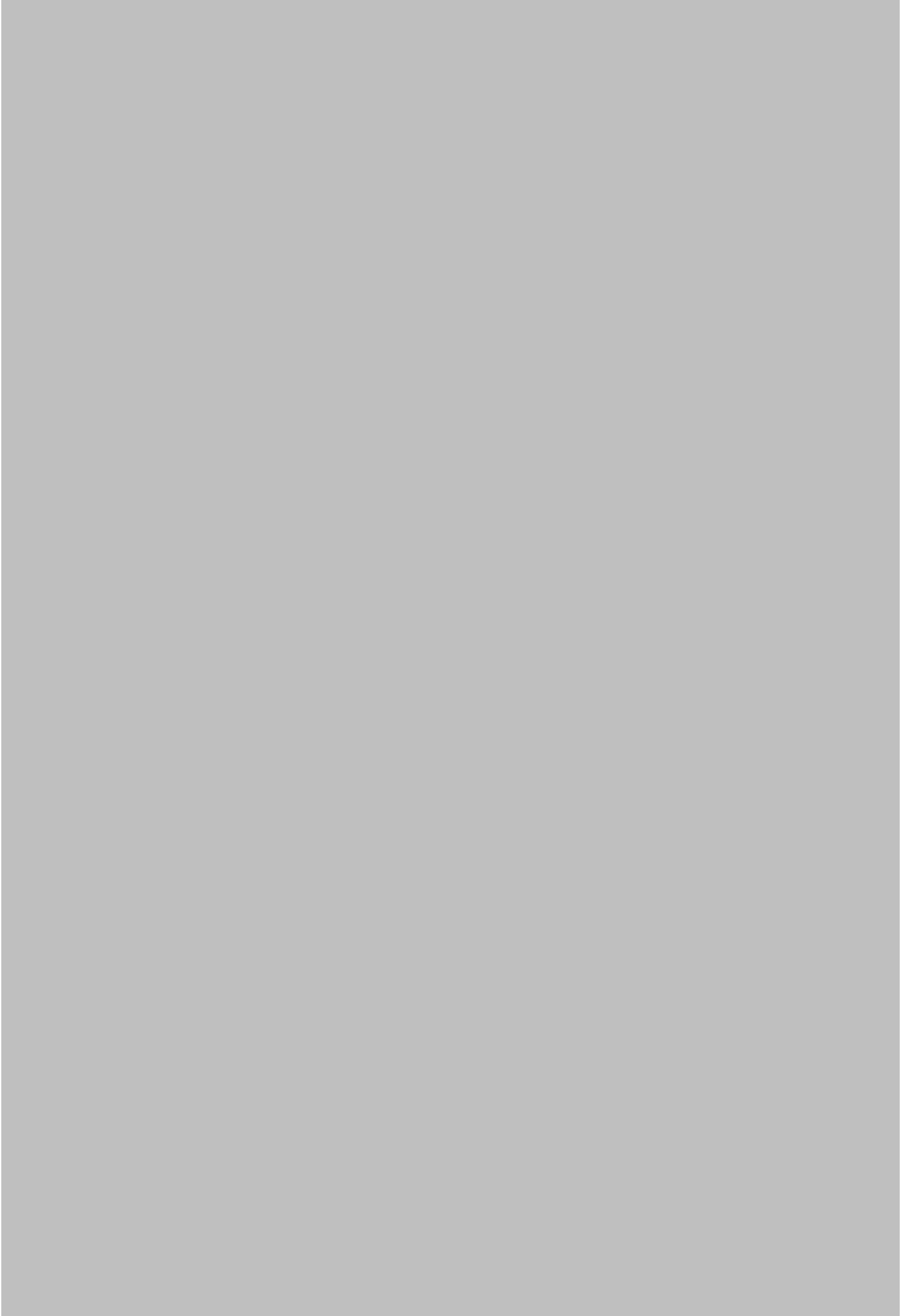


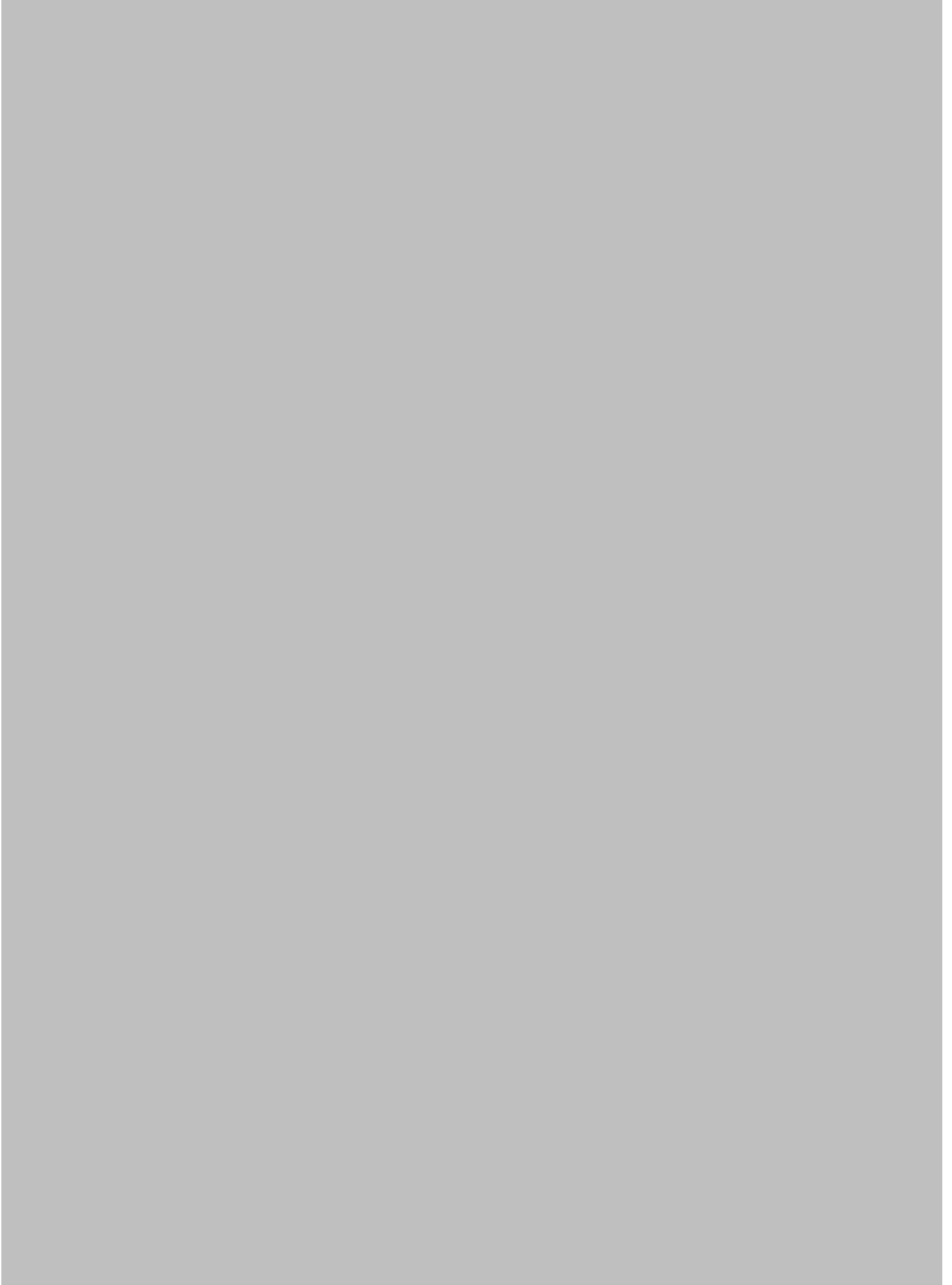
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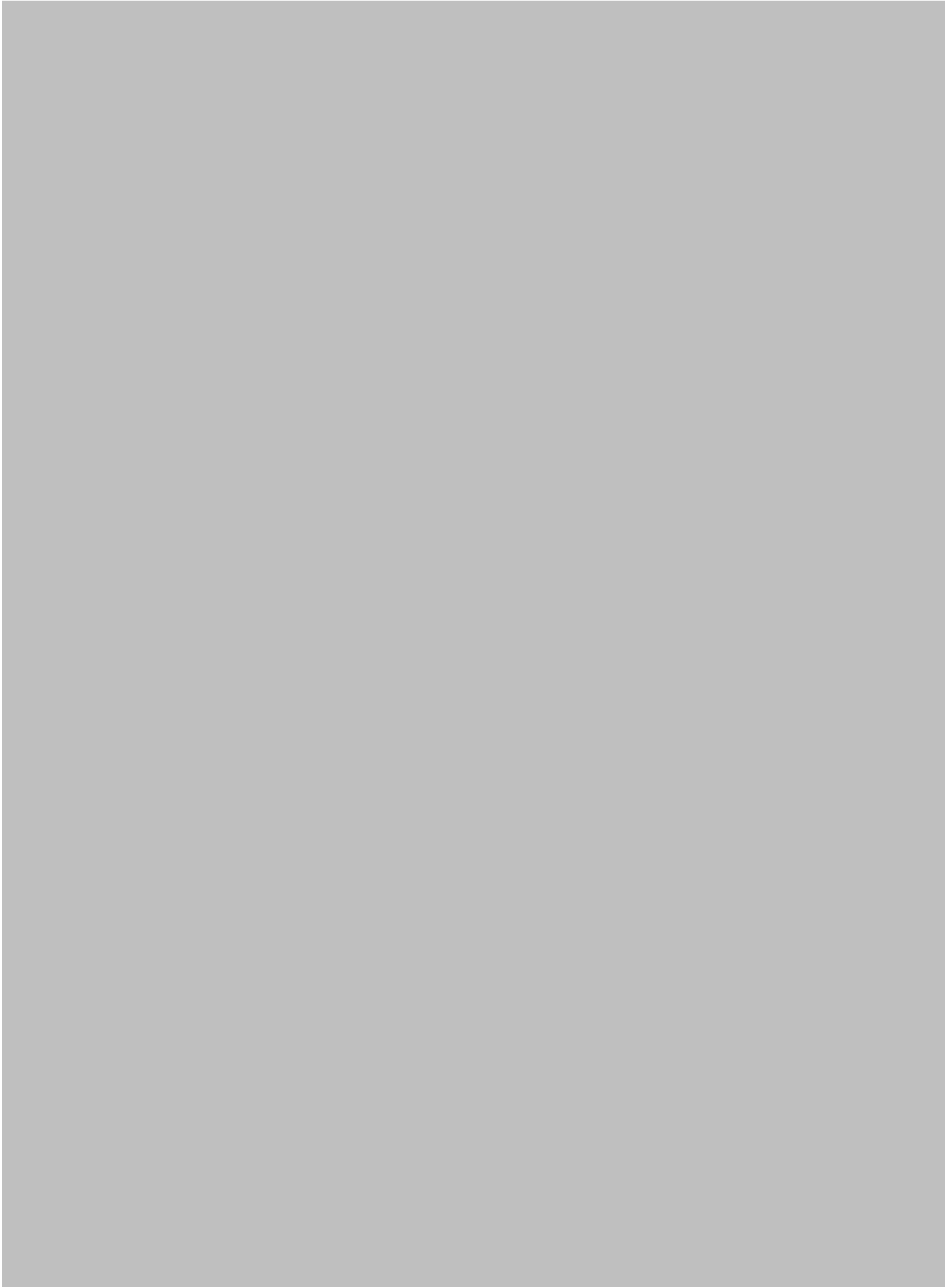
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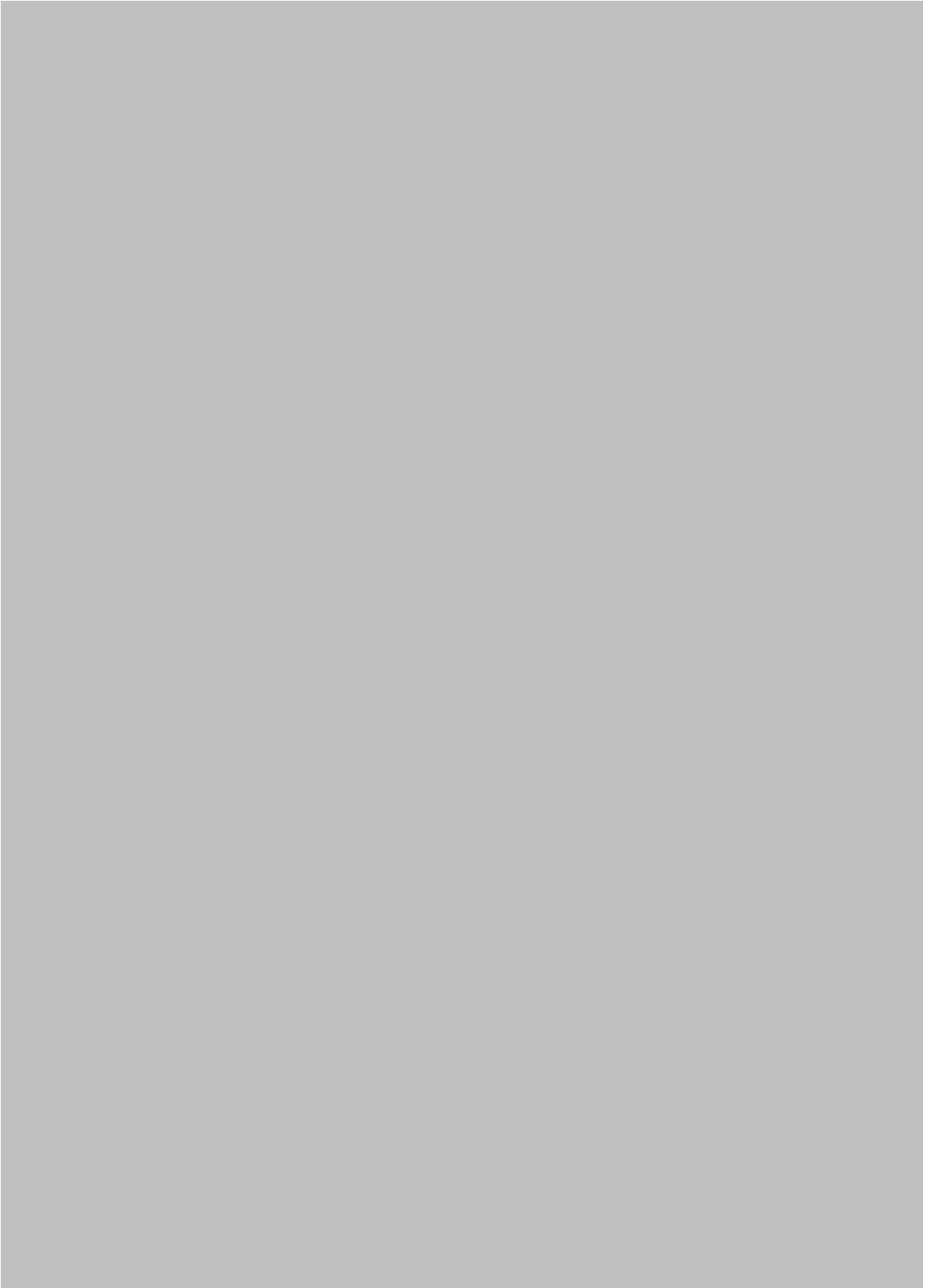


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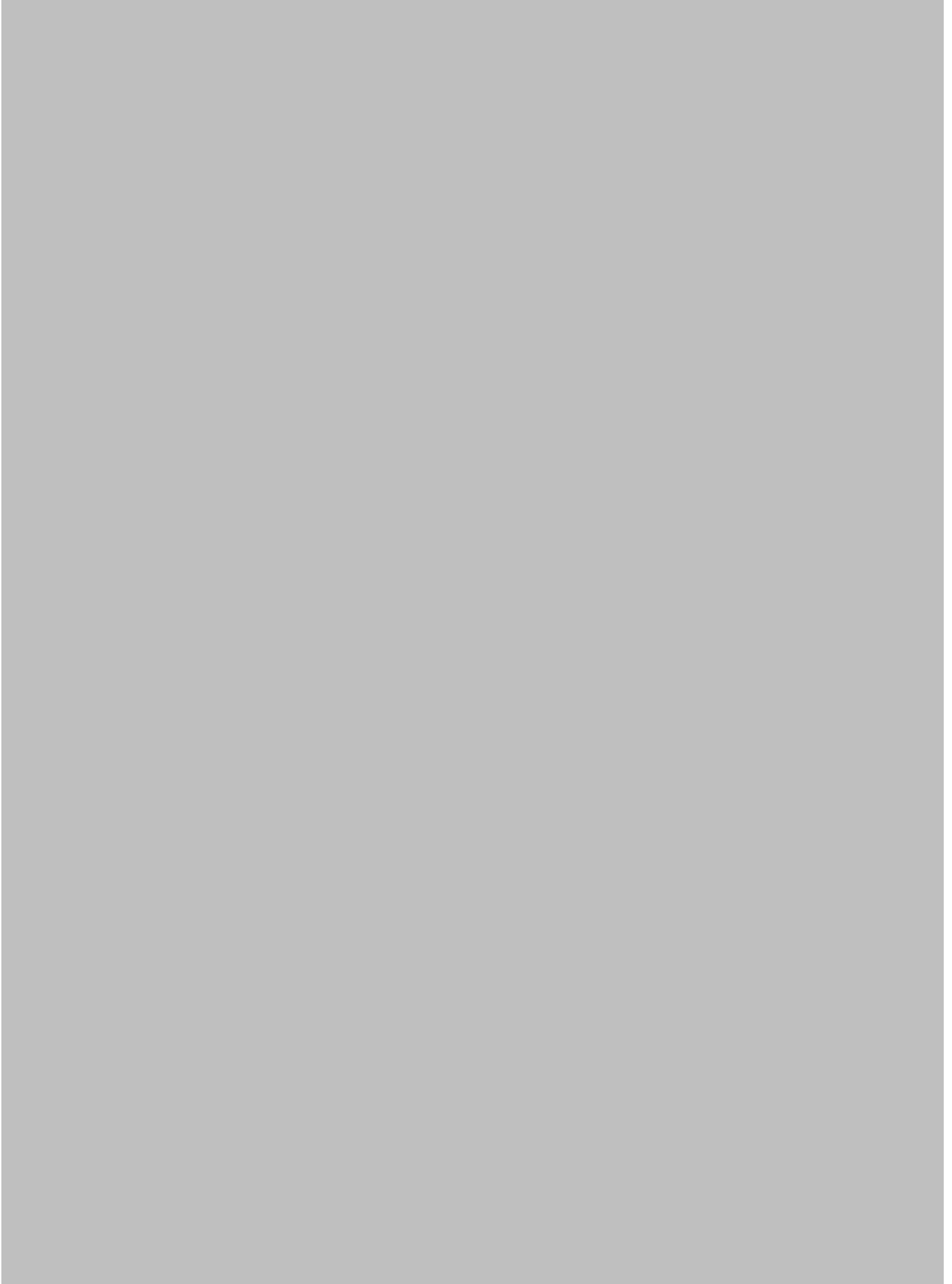


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