



NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN OF NEW ZEALAND

TE KAUNIHERA WAHINE O AOTEAROA

25 October 2013

S13.18

Submission to the Justice and Electoral Select Committee on the Public Safety (Public Protection Orders) Bill 68

The National Council of Women of New Zealand (**NCWNZ**) is an umbrella organisation representing 47 organisations affiliated at national level and a further 41 organisations affiliated at branch level. It has 22 branches throughout the country attended by representatives of these organisations, as well as individual members. NCWNZ's function is to represent and promote the interests of New Zealand women through research, discussion and action.

This submission has been prepared by the NCWNZ Justice and Law Reform Standing Committee and the Parliamentary Watch Committee after consultation with the membership of NCWNZ.

Introduction

NCWNZ has a long history of advocating for access to justice by women and children who are victims. Responding members are concerned about addressing the needs of victims and the requirement for protecting victims.

Specific clauses

Part 1 Clause 8

Chief executive may apply for public protection order

A majority of responding members suggested that the victim, if the victim so requests, needed to be informed and made aware of the process and to be alerted that a public protection order was being applied for. If the victim knows what is taking place this gives peace of mind, strengthens the feeling that justice is being done and heightens the sense of security for the victim.

A minority responded that the victim should be informed after the order was obtained, otherwise false hopes could be raised and the victim could be re-traumatised if the application for the public protection order was unsuccessful.

There was a small concern about excessive media attention which may affect the rights of offenders on their impending release from prison. There is a need for offenders to be rehabilitated and a pathway back to society with chaperoning in public if necessary.

Part 1 Clause 17**Review of public protection order**

The overwhelming majority of responding members stated that it should be mandatory for the victim to be informed of the impending review of the public protection order as well as the outcome of the review.

The victim should be entitled to receive notice of the review because the victim needs to be aware and informed of the review as part of the process toward healing and security. The involvement gives control to the victim and assists her/him to recover from the trauma.

Part 1 Clause 89**Cancellation of protective supervision order**

There is concern that there is no provision for the victim to receive notice of the *application* for cancellation of the protective supervision order. It is important for the victim to receive notice and it should be mandatory, if the victim so requests, to ensure that the victim is fully informed of the possible change of circumstances of the offender.

Conclusion

There is strong support for the provisions of this Bill provided that there are provisions for the opportunity of greater participation by the victim as part of the healing process and heightened well-being for the victim.

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National President

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Justice and Law Reform SC Convenor