ZONTA INTERNATIONAL DISTRICT 16
EMPOWERING WOMEN THROUGH SERVICE & ADVOCACY

39 Dungarvan Road
Wellington 6037

16 September 2019

Abortion Legislation Committee
Parliament Buildings
Wellington

By Hand

Kia ora,

I **attach** the submission of Zonta International District 16 Incorporated on the Abortion Legislation Bill.

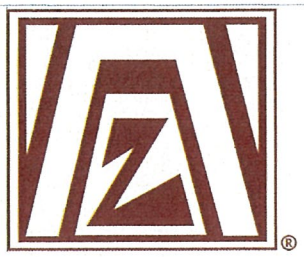
Our contacts are:

- Souella Cumming, Zonta International District 16 Governor; and
- Helen Bowie, Zonta International District 16 Advocacy Chair.

We do not wish to make an oral submission before the Select Committee.

Ngā mihi,

Helen Bowie
Zonta International District 16 Advocacy Chair



ZONTA
INTERNATIONAL
DISTRICT 16
EMPOWERING WOMEN
THROUGH SERVICE & ADVOCACY

TO: ABORTION LEGISLATION COMMITTEE

ON: ABORTION LEGISLATION BILL

16 SEPTEMBER 2019

INTRODUCTION

1 This submission is from Zonta International District 16 Incorporated (*Zonta D16*).

2 We do not wish to make an oral submission before the Select Committee.

ABOUT ZONTA D16

3 Zonta D16 has been active in New Zealand for over 50 years.

4 Zonta D16 is an organisation of professionals empowering women through service and advocacy. We envision a world in which women's rights are recognised as human rights and every woman is able to achieve her full potential.

MAIN POINTS

5 Zonta D16 supports the provisions of the Abortion Legislation Bill (*the Bill*) that decriminalise abortion.

6 In particular, Zonta D16 believes that:

6.1 Abortion should be decriminalised and treated as a health care issue

Zonta D16 supports the proposed amendments to the Crimes Act 1961 and the Contraception, Sterilisation, and Abortion Act 1977 (*the CSA Act*) to decriminalise abortion for a pregnant woman, and for health practitioners who perform an abortion or who supply products to induce an abortion.

Zonta D16 believes that the change to the current law is long overdue. There is no place for the current law, which stigmatises and criminalises women.

6.2 Decriminalising abortion is in line with the Concluding Observations of the Eighth Periodic Report of the CEDAW Committee

The health approach is consistent with obligations under various international conventions, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. In the Concluding Observations of its Eighth Report, the United Nations CEDAW Committee recommended that New Zealand remove abortion from the Crimes Act and amend the CSA Act in order to fully decriminalise abortion and incorporate the treatment of abortion into health services legislation.

CONCLUSION

7 Zonta D16 supports the provisions of the Bill that decriminalise abortion.

8 Those provisions accord with CEDAW Committee recommendations, with which Zonta D16 concurs.