



20 September 2024

The Right Honourable Paul Goldsmith
Minister of Justice
paul.goldsmith@parliament.govt.nz

Tēnā koe Minister Goldsmith,

Re: Introduction of Legislation to Criminalise Stalking

I am writing on behalf of Zonta District 16 (New Zealand), made up of 28 Zonta Clubs across New Zealand, which are members of Zonta International, a human rights organisation focused on building a better world for women and girls. Zonta International is over 100 years old and has been active in New Zealand since 1965.

One of our focus areas is violence against women, which is particularly pressing in New Zealand given the shocking rates of violence against women and children. As you will no doubt be aware, New Zealand has the highest rate of family violence in the OECD, and this has a profound long-term impact in our community. Violence against women and children impacts on many areas of concern including physical and mental health, child protection and development, emergency housing and welfare, and policing and the courts.

We have been following the discussions around the gap in our legislative framework in the area of stalking and supported the petition which was submitted to Parliament earlier this year to have this gap addressed.

As that petition laid out, the lack of a stalking law in New Zealand prevents coordinated responses from the relevant agencies, and prevents victims of stalking from getting prompt, consistent, and effective protection. Stalking-related behaviours are prohibited across a patchwork of fragmented statutes, which fail to capture stalking's underlying harmful pattern. The seriousness of this gap in our legislation was clearly epitomised in the murder of 21-year-old Farzana Yaqubi in Auckland in 2022.

We were encouraged to hear about your comments on 26 June 2024 when you received that petition, that you were committed to introducing legislation which would criminalise stalking this year.

As the end of the year approaches, we would like to hear from you about how this work is progressing and when you expect this legislation to be introduced.

We look forward to hearing from you,

Kind Regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'TAMcRae', with a stylized, cursive script.

Tiffany McRae

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Zonta District 16 New Zealand

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