

Dear Community Affairs Legislation Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission to the Inquiry into the Commonwealth Redress Scheme for Institutional Child Sexual Abuse Bill 2017 and related bill.

The Commonwealth Government needs to ensure that all State and Territory governments, and significantly more non-government and religious organisations opt in to the scheme to provide redress for victims. The community will not tolerate inaction to all recommendations of the Royal Commission, particularly the scheme for redress and keeping children safe in the future.

The harm done to thousands of children by adults engaged by institutions, who were essentially 'in loco parentis', are worthy of significant redress because of the lifelong harm done to the children in care. Abused children who were placed in 'in home' care by an institution should also be eligible under the redress scheme as these arrangements ought to have been closely supervised for the duration of the placement.

The life-long damage done to the abused children sometimes had such catastrophic consequences, it sentenced many to life-long institutionalisation. This occurred because their power and dignity was stolen and irrevocably damaged by the abusers. Sometimes this resulted in lives of crime when the person was no longer in an institution. For this reason the mooted criminal exclusions policy should not be countenanced under any circumstances. If the exclusion policy was thought of in reverse, **no** humane society would sentence a child to institutional sexual abuse for the crime described in the mooted policy¹. Many people convicted of the offences described in the mooted criminal exclusion policy, would likely be upstanding citizens had they been cared for in an appropriate 'in loco parentis' environment. For these reasons the mooted criminal exclusions policy should never be included in the redress scheme. To include a criminal exclusion policy would be a grave misunderstanding of the horrors and very tragic consequences of sexual abuse of children and an additional cruel punishment to survivors.

I would like to thank the legislation committee for their work and wish you well in providing a redress scheme worthy of the recommendations and the outstanding work done by the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

Yours sincerely

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¹ Mooted criminal exclusion policy - committing a crime of any sexual offence or another serious crime such as drug, homicide or fraud offences for which they received a custodial sentence of five or more years