



Presbyterian Women's Association of Australia in the State of New South Wales

PO Box 2196, Strawberry Hills NSW 2012



27th July, 2012

SENATE PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE,
POST OFFICE BOX 6100
CANBERRA A.C.T. 2600

To the Secretary,

**Re: Inquiry into Crimes Legislation Amendment Bill (slavery, Slavery like conditions
and people trafficking)**

The Presbyterian Women's Association represents women from all walks of life across New South Wales. The State Council consists of 51 elected representatives from city and country and meets monthly to discuss a range of matters.

We are concerned for the welfare of women and the community, but the plight of women in some cultures is now happening in Australia. It is therefore a welcome development for this Bill to attempt to deal with some of the abuses which have become evident in recent times.

The plight of some girls forced into marriage is pitiful and difficult to assist at the present time. The provisions in this Bill for action to be taken at Law will strengthen the ability of our police and welfare workers to assist those young women who come to the Community Groups or individuals for help in cases of sexual abuse or forced marriage. Immigrant children educated in Australian schools will expect more of life. Families should be given instructions in their own language when they arrive so that they will understand that this custom is against the Law in Australia and there are serious consequences.

The broader definitions of exploitation, forced labour and slavery and the inclusion of psychological oppression and abuse of power are important. Victims of trafficking will be better protected.

We commend this important Bill and encourage the Committee to approve it so that it may go to the Government and soon become Law.

Yours sincerely,

Patricia M. Watts
Acting State Secretary

c.c. Mrs. Marion Smith A.M.

*We are a state-wide network of Christian women supporting our Church's Ministries,
participating in the wider work of Christ through interchurch and community bodies.*