

Penalties and Sentences (Sexual Offences) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025

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Submitter Comments:

I wholeheartedly support the proposal from #YourReferenceAintRelevant campaign calling for a total abolition of good character references in the sentencing of convicted rapists, child sex offenders, and perpetrators of domestic violence. As a survivor of child sexual assault and rape, this issue has deeply impacted me. Seeing convicted offenders get lighter sentences due to "good character" has discouraged me from reporting my abusers. These references allow abusers to weaponise their social status. One of my abusers was a medical doctor and it occurred while I was admitted as an inpatient, when I was under age. These perpetrators use systems of power to continue abusing children. Justice should be based on the facts, not who they are in the public eye or who they know. If they are convicted of a sexual offence, they are not a good person. Full stop. To abuse children is disgraceful, abhorrent, and they should face the full consequences of the law.