

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

**Submission No:** 77  
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### Submitter Comments:

As a survivor who never felt they could even consider pursuing justice through our legal system due to the huge barriers in place, I wholeheartedly support the proposal from the #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. The most painful thing about the abuse I suffered is that I have family members who still defend the perpetrator despite entirely believing what he did to me. Giving them legal platform to spout the "good guy" narrative would have completely broken me. Allowing these references enables abusers to weaponise their social status to minimise harm. Abusers literally use their social standing to groom the community and gain access to victims without being questioned. This premeditated, manipulative behaviour should lead to harsher penalties, not more lenient sentences.