

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

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Submitter Comments:

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. Allowing these references enables abusers to weaponise their social status to minimise harm. Justice should be based on the facts of the case not on who the offender knows. Spiritual leaders in faith communities can groom a community to think well of their character and hide abuse they perpetrate from the public eye. These offenders are sometimes respected members of a community with many people who will speak highly of them as they are unaware of the crimes they commit in secret. You only need to look at the Catholic Church as a clear example of this.