

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

Submission No: 173

Submitted by: [REDACTED]

Publication: Making the submission public but withholding your name

Attachments: No attachment

Submitter Comments:

Allowing good character references during the sentencing of a convicted sex offender can undermine the gravity of the offense and shift focus away from the harm done to the victim. Such references often highlight the offender's positive traits in unrelated contexts—such as being a good employee, friend, or community member—which can create an unjust perception that these qualities should mitigate punishment. This can minimize the seriousness of the crime, perpetuate harmful myths about who commits sexual offenses, and discourage victims from coming forward. Sentencing should prioritize accountability, the severity of the harm caused, and the protection of the community—not the offender's social standing or past reputation.