

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

Submission No: 190
Submitted by: Casey Curran
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Submitter Comments:

I am writing to support the #YourReferenceAintRelevant campaign and all for the removal of good character references in sentencing for crimes like child sexual abuse, domestic violence and rape. Good character references would have prevented myself and others from becoming victims of the same perpetrator who used his "good character" to avoid prison time. As a Human Resources manager, he used his position to hire victims. The same reputation that protected him in court enabled him to offend again. He told me I was "one of a lifetime of victims," a reality that shows how many should have been protected if this did not exist. An offender's "good character" is often what grants them access to victims in the first place. Trust, credibility, and respectability are powerful tools for grooming and exploitation, especially in cases involving children and vulnerable individuals. The law must reflect the reality that good character does not erase harm, risk and damage to those in the community. I urge the committee to deliver meaningful reform by recommending abolishing good character references in those cases. It's time to create a legal system which truly prioritises justice and the well-being of survivors. Thank you for considering this submission.