



Domestic Violence  
Resource Centre

8 January 1998

Ms Judy Gamin MLA  
Chairperson  
Legal, Constitutional and Administrative  
Review Committee  
Parliament House  
George Street  
Brisbane Q 4000

Dear Ms Gamin,

**Re: Criminal Law (Sex Offenders Reporting) Bill 1997**

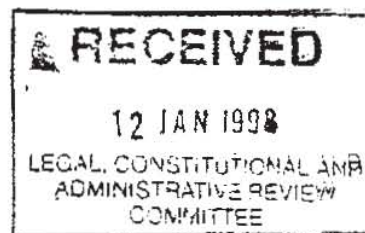
Thank you for the opportunity accorded to the Domestic Violence Resource Centre (DVRC) to respond to the Private Member's Bill "Criminal Law (Sex Offenders Reporting) Bill 1997 (the Bill)". Further to reviewing the Bill, DVRC would firstly likely to endorse the concept of such a piece of legislation as well as the consultative process entered into, in principle.

Secondly, we would like to stress that whilst the organisation has worked to eliminate violence against women and their children for some ten years, we are not direct service practitioners in the area of child sexual abuse. However, we have been active participants in highlighting violence against children and young people issues for as many years.

Given the above, our comments are more directed at principle and philosophical issues.

Within the above outlined parameters, we feel it is critical that we draw your attention to the following issues:

- (a) that the language used in many parts of the Bill in reference to offences against children requires some re-thinking. We believe that all sex offences are serious, and with regard to children, this needs to be stressed as such. Usage of language such as "serious sex offences" contributes to the minimisation of this form of crime against children.
- (b) much research in this area indicate that men who commit crimes of sexual violence against children generally re-offend over the course of their life time, regardless of intervention. This type of finding, we believe, necessitates life long disclosure to police and reporting agencies. It is time that society transfers the onus of responsibility from victims to perpetrators.
- (c) We submit that Section 5 of the Bill be summarily deleted, as offenders must notify at all times in all geographical locations.



- (d) The formulae developed for reporting periods while seemingly given much consideration once again do not address the ongoing nature of this crime.
- (e) We believe it is imperative that we put value to the thinking that offences against children are a crime, as well as uphold the rights of all children to safety by ensuring that reporting is upheld and enacted upon at all times.
- (f) As up to 77 per cent of crimes of sexual violence are perpetrated by a male family member or a male in a position of trust, we would strongly submit that these men also be subject to registration as they may hold employment positions in the community which enable greater access to children other than those in their family or immediate circle.

We congratulate the intent of the Bill, however, the legislation must be focussed on ensuring safety of children; as such the opportunities it affords for child protection have to be the *most* significant factor in it's development and implementation.

Yours sincerely,



**Donna Justo**  
Community Education and Training Coordinator  
and  
**Mythiley Iyer**  
Director  
For the Domestic Violence Resource Centre.