



office@ncwnz.org.nz
www.ncwnz.org.nz

C/o PSA
PO Box 3817
WELLINGTON 6140
Attn: NCWNZ

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S22.20 oral

Oral submission to the Education and Workforce Committee on the Worker Protection (Migrant and Other Employees) Bill

Presenters:

Gabriel BrettKelly and Margaret Ledgerton

Education and Workforce Committee

Marja Lubeck (Labour, chair), Angela Roberts (Labour), Paul Goldsmith (National), Camilla Belich (Labour), Jo Luxton (Labour), Ricardo Mendez (Greens), Ibrahim Omer (Labour), Stuart Smith (National), James McDowall (Act)

Introduction

1. The Minister in charge of the Bill, Priyanka Radhakrishnan, briefed the select committee beforehand. This was a useful, informative session which we were able to observe. Minister Radhakrishnan explained the aim of the bill was to introduce an offence and penalty regime for offences towards the more minor end. She also outlined the additional resources which have been made available. Educational resources will be rolled out once the bill passes.

Heading with subheadings

2. Ata mārie. I'm Gabriel BrettKelly and Margaret Ledgerton is also on this zoom. We represent Te Kaunihera Wāhine o Aotearoa, the National Council of women of New Zealand (NCWNZ).
3. Thanks for your time today.
4. In writing this submission we had the input of about 100 NCW members who responded from all over the country. They read about the bill, thought about it, discussed it and emailed me their thoughts. They were unanimous in their strong support for what this bill is aiming to achieve.
5. Many of our members are from provincial areas where migrant workers are involved in agriculture – Southland, Manawatu, Warkworth and Bay of Plenty .

6. They are very concerned that migrant workers are being exploited in our country. They want to see all such exploitation stop and therefore welcome these initiatives. We noted in our written submission the positive impact already of the improved resourcing of the Labour Inspectorate.
7. As you can also see from our written submission, as well as the improvements mooted in this Bill, they would like to see further improvements to the NZ visa system, namely the over reliance on temporary visas and the binding of workers to exploitative employers via the visa. They believe that women temporary migrant workers in particular are disadvantaged by the difficult path to permanent work visas in New Zealand.

Questions

8. Migrant women workers especially in the sex industry. NCWNZ supports the Prostitutes' Collective's campaign to amend the Prostitution Reform Act so that migrant sex workers receive the full protections of the Act.