

4/04/18

**Submission to the Social Services and Community Committee on the Child Poverty Reduction Bill**

**1. Introduction**

1.1 This submission is made on behalf of the **Grey Power New Zealand Federation Inc.**

1.2 The contact is Jan Pentecost - Email: [jan.pentecost@gmail.com](mailto:jan.pentecost@gmail.com)

1.3 The Grey Power New Zealand Federation (Inc) is a non-sectarian and non-party political, advocacy organisation that aims to advance, promote and protect the welfare and well-being of older people.

1.4 The Grey Power New Zealand Federation (Inc) is made up of some 75 individual Associations with an overall membership of approximately 68,000.

1.5 Grey Power does not wish to speak to this submission

2. **General Comments:**

2.1 The Grey Power New Zealand Federation Inc generally supports the intent of this bill because as noted in the Children’s Commissioners’ research in 2014 approximately 285,000 New Zealand children (27%) live in households where family income falls below the poverty line.

And although all poverty is of concern to Grey Power, it is the entrenched, intergenerational poverty, where children are living without hope that is especially important and we believe this Bill, along with attention to structural reform, may be a step in the right direction.

We certainly endorse **Priyanca Radhakrishnan’s quote from** Nelson Mandela: *"There can be no keener revelation of a society's soul than the way in which it treats its children."* (**stated during the first reading of this Bill)**

2.2 High levels of child poverty have severe social implications which must concern all of New Zealand because children who grow up in poor households are more likely to experience adverse outcomes in other facets of their life such as low educational attainment, poor physical and mental health, and exposure or susceptibility to harmful phenomena such as substance abuse and crime (Children’s Commissioners’ 2014, Research Brief). This is likely to impact in various ways on many individuals, including older people, in New Zealand society. Therefore, we support specific legislation which will mean that reports will be available at Budget time each year based on the 10 measures of child poverty and providing information on progress towards meeting the set targets etc.

**3. Comment on Clauses of the Bill**

We do not provide a clause by clause analysis of the Bill

**4. Conclusion:**

4.1 Grey Power generally supports the National Council of Women’s submission on this Bill, in particular their clauses which “encourages greater commitment to action by Government for all children, and especially for families and whānau in poverty” and points to the necessity for the Government to work with other groups to actively reduce child poverty.

4.2 Grey Power supports the intent of this Bill to measure set targets to be accomplished within specific timeframes and to provide some transparency and accountability in an effort to reduce child poverty for all children in New Zealand.

*The Secretary*

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