



**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

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STANDING COMMITTEE ON JUSTICE AND COMMUNITY SERVICES  
Ms Elizabeth Lee MLA (Chair), Ms Bec Cody MLA (Deputy Chair)  
Mr Michael Petterson MLA


## Submission Cover Sheet

Crimes (Consent) Amendment Bill 2018

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Justice and Community Safety Committee  
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Dear Member of the Legislative Assembly

I am writing to you to express my support for the Crimes (Consent) Amendment Bill 2018 currently being considered by the Justice and Community Safety Committee.

The issue of sexual violence and harassment against women in our community deeply concerns me. As a young woman who grew up in the Canberra region, and now with nieces and nephews living in the ACT, I wish to contribute to their safety in whatever way I can as they grow older and engage in relationships of their own.

As highlighted in the Human Rights Commission report *Changing the Course* (2017) students at Canberra's universities are more likely than their interstate peers to be sexually harassed or assaulted whilst engaging in campus and off-campus activities. The Young Women's Advisory Group ([YWAG](#)) of the Equality Rights Alliance [surveyed over 1,000 young women](#) across Australia about their experiences of relationships and sexuality education at school (12.78% responded from the ACT). Nationally, young women overall did not feel confident about their understanding of respectful relationships after sex education, with almost two thirds (63%) of respondents not being taught consent education at school.

The time for leadership is now.

The introduction of a positive definition of consent in the *Crimes Act 1900* (ACT) would be a progressive step forward for gender equality in the ACT. It would set a benchmark for appropriate sexual behaviour, assist with culturally appropriate public education campaigns aimed at building relationships based on respect amongst peers and bring the ACT into line with all other Australian jurisdictions which have a statutory definition of consent.

I urge you to support the Crimes (Consent) Amendment Bill 2018.

Thank you for your time, and I look forward to following the work of the Justice and Community Safety Committee in progressing this important issue.

Yours sincerely

Sienna Aguilar