



**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

**Submission Number: 14**

**Date Authorised for Publication: 25 September 2018**

From: [REDACTED]  
Sent: Tuesday, 11 September 2018 6:52 PM  
To: LA Committee - JCS  
Cc: [REDACTED]  
Subject: Introduction of positive consent legislation in the ACT.

Karen Blake

Committee Secretary  
Justice and Community Safety Committee

[LACommitteeJCS@parliament.act.gov.au](mailto:LACommitteeJCS@parliament.act.gov.au)

11 September 2018

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. One woman a week is murdered in Australia by her current or former partner;<sup>1</sup><sup>[1]</sup> 1.6 million Australian women have experienced physical and/or sexual violence by a cohabiting partner since age 15;<sup>2</sup><sup>[2]</sup> 20% of all Australian women have experienced sexual violence;<sup>3</sup><sup>[3]</sup> the rate of sexual violence against women has risen dramatically since 2012;<sup>4</sup><sup>[4]</sup> this is only the tip of the iceberg showing how appalling attitudes towards women are in this country and this needs to change. The ACT can be a leader in this change.

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 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 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.

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<sup>1</sup><sup>[1]</sup> Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC) 2017. The 2017 National Homicide Monitoring Program report by the AIC showed that over a 2-year period from 2012/13 to 2013/14, there were 99 female victims of intimate partner homicide. Women continue to be over-represented as victims of intimate partner homicide, accounting for 79% of all intimate partner homicides.

<sup>2</sup><sup>[2]</sup> Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW), Family, domestic and sexual violence in Australia, 2018, Canberra.

<sup>3</sup><sup>[3]</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2017. Personal Safety, Australia, 2016, ABS cat. no. 4906.0. Canberra: ABS.

<sup>4</sup><sup>[4]</sup> Gareth Hutchens, The Guardian (Wed 8 Nov 2017). In the report released by the ABS identified that sexual assault was experienced by 17% of all Australian women and sexual threat experienced by 3.6%.

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

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Sent from Windows Mail