

ORAL SUBMISSION TO THE EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE SELECT COMMITTEE  
on the Holidays (Bereavement Leave for Miscarriage) Amendment Bill (No 2),  
by Zoom on 6 MAY 2020

Gabriel BrettKelly and Margaret Ledgerton

Kia ora koutou katoa. Thank you for this opportunity to appear in person to support the National Council of Women's written submission on the Holidays (Bereavement Leave for Miscarriage) Amendment Bill (No 2). My name is Gabriel BrettKelly and I'm the Employment Convenor for NCW and Margaret Ledgerton who is with me today is from the NCW Parliamentary Watch Cmtee.

As you will have seen from our written submission we support this bill. The less employees are put in a position where they have to go to their employer and ask for a favour the better for the workplace culture in terms of efficiency and productivity. This bill would mean the employee involved would just have to inform the employer that they are taking bereavement leave and provide a doctor's certificate. The worker and the employer don't have to discuss stressful and delicate details; rather they can deal with the matter in a straightforward manner. It will be easier for the employer as well as the worker.

We also support the amount of the leave entitlement although we have noted that some of the few other countries which do have paid bereavement leave for miscarriage have more generous provisions. NZ women would be able to use their paid sick leave entitlement to augment the bereavement leave if there were health complications associated with the miscarriage.

I want to draw your attention to our two final recommendations

- We recommended clarifying that midwives as well GPs can confirm pregnancies.  
Some women use a midwife rather than a GP and allowing midwives to confirm there was a pregnancy would make life easier for them.
- We recommended MBIE communicate the new entitlement to all NZ communities. Miscarriage can be a delicate topic for all cultures and we

would like to see MBIE taking advice from different communities on how best to let them know about the new entitlement.

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN OF NEW ZEALAND

NOTES FROM THE ORAL SUBMISSION TO THE EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE

SELECT COMMITTEE

ON THE HOLIDAYS [BEREAVEMENT LEAVE FOR MISCARRIAGE] AMENDMENT

BILL 6 MAY 2020

Presenter: Gabriel Brett Kelly [Convenor, Employment Committee], also present  
Margaret Ledgerton [Parliamentary Watch Committee]

Select Committee members present: Parmjeet Parmar [Chairperson], Jan Tinetti [L],  
Simeon Brown [N], Clare Curran [L], Golriz Shahraman [G], Nikki Kaye [N], Denise Lee  
[N], Marja Lubeck [L], Jo Luxton [L], Mark Patterson [NZF], Nicola Willis [N]

Gabriel presented the oral submission [under three minutes].

Marja Lubeck asked, given previous presenters' recommendations that the term  
'confirmed', as in confirmed pregnancy, be dropped, what was the NCW's opinion?

Gabriel's response: Our members had not discussed this. We thought we would want to  
see as wide a definition of 'confirmed' as possible to make it as easy as possible for  
the employee/s.

Margaret emphasised the second of our two recommendations: the need for  
comprehensive communication of the new legal requirement, not only to employers. It  
was noted that this seemed especially important, given the often unspoken and  
unacknowledged significance of a miscarriage, its sensitivity and the need to  
communicate its implications to the wider public.

The presentation was completed well within the 15 minute slot.