

Dear Committee for the Executive Office,

I forward this from a place of deep frustration. I have completed the online questionnaire. This only allows 500 characters per answer and so is not an attempt for serious and meaningful engagement from respondents.

As a Victim and Survivor, I have watched as the committee has articulated they need more detail, more examples. Evidence... but have not communicated how to do this, nor provided a facility to do so. I find out this evening that the deadline to provide formal input is midnight tonight. I do not believe that is sufficient as part of a meaningful exercise to understand or input to the amending of such an important piece of legislation. This was not communicated to victims, survivors, and affected people or communicated in a way that would be understood.

It has also consistently been said to Victims and Survivors that they need to "provide evidence". A small number who have been allowed to appear in front of the committee have been asked "how many does this affect". These are deeply inappropriate to ask any survivor as they will have struggled to find out the most basic facts of their own identity and experience. This is why an inquiry is needed: to tell the State the extent and nature of the wrongdoing, to identify all victims (not just those knocking at the door), assess and deliver appropriate redress and support.

In haste, I am forwarding substantial extracts from my written testimony to the independent panel. It contains details of my case and significant matters that challenge a setting-based inquiry and redress scheme.

The bill looks to use admission to a limited number of settings or a relevant place in all its qualifying criteria. It does not identify characteristics of individuals whose experience the State is looking into, like unwed women and girls, or harmful practices that were experienced, like forced disappearance or human trafficking. I believe there is no list of places that will be adequate to satisfy the State's obligations in these matters.

I believe my experience can be added as listing the children's home I was sent to but the records from this place are falsified to conceal the duration of my stay (I

was there for months, the records have me there less than 24 hours). However, this will not reach out to my birth mother, nor qualify her as a relevant person.

My mother was taken from her home and controlled by a Voluntary Adoption Agency in [REDACTED] She was moved to different places by them and only admitted to the hospital where she gave birth to me. They controlled and directed her through her pregnancy and ultimately, removed her child when they were not permitted to do so. The State authorities then made this permanent by presenting a false case to court.

The ability to list “organisations” as relevant institutions must be included. The ability to prove “engagement with” an organisation must be included in the definition of a relevant person to communicate and allow women like her to come forward, or to know that experiences similar to theirs are being investigated.

In my case, the Adoption Agency reached into my birth mother’s home and controlled her to remove her child. This is the same as of so many cases that already fall into the draft’s remit but my mother, and all women and girls like her, are excluded as she was not admitted to a particular place.

To date, the public communication of the Truth Recovery Process has not reached out to her, or anyone like her. I know of others who had their children taken from their own homes by non-state social workers against their wishes. They too are excluded or have not been told publicly that their experience matters and will be investigated. This arbitrarily excludes victims of human disappearances, and/or trafficking, where women and girls or their children were taken out of the jurisdiction. I and others believe strongly this is indefensible and not to a legitimate aim.

The TEO have confirmed that they are not working on, and have no plans to work on, additional legislation or processes of investigation outside this draft. This means this legislation is the only opportunity to have the same harms, regardless of setting, to be investigated and addressed.

There is a legitimate expectation that amendments will be made to this bill to give a clearer scope to include experiences that are not setting based but are characteristic or experience based.

To make that point, what follows is part of my deeply personal statement to the independent panel, it contains evidence I have coalited thus far. It is a window into the difficulty and themes many have faced.

As the independent panel have been tasked with the same limited brief by the TEO, I and others do not have confidence that the substantive issues of our testimonies will be included in their recommendations and included in the as-yet-to-be defined terms-of-reference.

It is absurd (and damaging) to place people like me in this situation, where I must comment on a draft bill before I know what the independent panel will say, and when we can act to affect change, if it is found wanting. I also believe it is absurd to design the legislative framework for something; before the official mechanism for doing so has reported, and when it does, when the window for public commentary or commentary of those it affects closes.

I plead with the committee to engage and address what happened to those families that do not intersect with a convenient list of places.

Yours sincerely,

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**CONFIDENTIAL**









































































