

# Hon Andrew Little

Minister of Justice

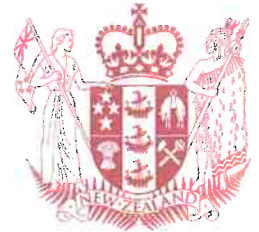
Minister for Courts

Minister for Treaty of Waitangi Negotiations

Minister Responsible for the NZSIS

Minister Responsible for the GCSB

Minister Responsible for Pike River Re-entry



11 APR 2019

Ken Orr  
Right to Life New Zealand Inc  
PO Box 668  
Christchurch 8140

Dear Mr Orr

## Abortion law

Thank you for your correspondence of 12 November regarding abortion law.

As you are aware, the Law Commission recently released a briefing paper setting out changes that could be made to align abortion law with a health approach. I am of the view that this would enable earlier access to safe and appropriate health services, resulting in better health outcomes.

I will be taking time to talk to my colleagues across all parties about the briefing paper before progressing further. At this stage, no decisions have been made about potential changes to abortion law, including the provisions of the Contraception, Sterilisation, and Abortion Act 1977 (CSA Act).

The current legal framework around abortion is that it is a crime in the first instance. This attaches a heavy stigma to a woman who is considering an abortion and taking advice about it. I acknowledge that women who attempt, obtain, or induce an unlawful abortion cannot be charged under the Crimes Act 1961. Women can, however, be charged for a breach of section 44 of the CSA Act, and fined if they are successfully prosecuted.

The final paragraph of your letter underscores your essential position on abortion when you ask, "Do you then believe that women should be permitted to endanger their lives by bringing about their own miscarriage or permitting someone else to do that?" The only reason you pose this question is because you do not trust women to make a decision about abortion. That is an unacceptable proposition underpinning public policy.

Thank you for taking the time to write and for sharing your views on these matters.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'A Little', written over a faint circular stamp.

Hon Andrew Little  
Minister of Justice