

18 September 2009

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**Submission to the Transport and Industrial Relations Committee on the
Infrastructure Bill 63-1**

The National Council of Women of New Zealand (NCWNZ) is an umbrella organisation representing 50 nationally organised societies and national members. It has 26 branches throughout the country attended by representatives of those societies and some 150 other societies as well as individual members. The Council's function is to serve women, the family and the community at local, national and international levels through research, study, discussion and action.

NCWNZ does not have a difficulty with most of this 'omnibus' Bill. Codes of Practice that help improve timetables and results of new work, repairs and maintenance to roads and utilities through better communication between the responsible organisations are welcome.

Part 4 repeals the Affordable Housing (Enabling Territorial Authorities) Act as being counter-productive and contradictory, according to both territorial authorities and developers. Restrictive covenants that place a barrier on affordable and social housing are addressed in a modified version as an amendment to the Properties Act.

NCWNZ is concerned that this previously laudable section on restricted covenants has been watered down in the Properties Act amendment. Although the wording in Section 277A Subsection 1 reads "A covenant concerning land is void if a principal purpose of the covenant is to stop the land being used for housing for- (a) people on low incomes..." there is no specific mention of affordable housing.

NCWNZ feels this omission will impact adversely on women and their families. Women's incomes are 12% lower than their male counterparts. A large majority of solo parents are women, and due to longevity a greater number of retired women live alone. Women and their families are therefore more likely than men to need affordable housing, particularly in areas that are safe and close to social amenities.

NCWNZ encourages Parliament to resist pressure from developers, and to amend the Properties Act with the full intent of protecting both affordable housing and social housing from restricted covenants.

Yours sincerely,

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National President

Katherine Ransom
Convener Economics Standing Committee