

3 August 2018

The Secretary
Legislative Council Select Committee
Parliament of Tasmania
Parliament House
HOBART TAS 7000
Email: flr@parliament.tas.gov.au

Dear Committee

Firearms Law Reforms

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to the inquiry into the proposed Tasmanian Firearms Law Reforms.

White Ribbon Australia supports the implementation of the 2017 National Firearms Agreement and harmonisation of State and Territory government firearm laws and regulations. We are concerned that the proposed firearms law reforms in Tasmania will weaken Australia's gun laws.

We support the analysis and recommendations of the submission made by the Alannah and Madeline Foundation regarding the Terms of Reference for this Inquiry.

We would also like to draw the Committee's attention to the danger firearms present to women and children experiencing domestic and family violence. Recent tragic murders have highlighted this: in May 2018, Peter Miles fatally shot his wife, daughter, four grandchildren and himself and in July 2018, John Edwards fatally shot his two teenage children and himself. We must do everything possible to prevent this outcome and ensure effective gun control.

Research indicates a link between access to firearms and an increased severity of intimate partner violence^{1,2}. Perpetrators also use firearms to control women by, for example, threatening to hurt themselves, their partner and/or their children. The ease of lethality associated with firearms makes this form of abuse particularly damaging to the psychological wellbeing of women and children³.

Women living in regional and remote communities are especially vulnerable to firearm-related violence given the prevalence of firearms in these areas⁴.

¹ Zeoli, A., Malinski, R. & Turchan, B. (2016). 'Risk and Targeted Interventions: Firearms in Intimate Partner Violence'. *Epidemiologic Reviews*. 38(1): 125-139.

² Sorenson, S. (2017). 'Guns in intimate partner violence: Comparing incidents that involve a gun, other weapon, or no weapon'. *Journal of Women's Health*; 26(3): 249-258.

³ Sorenson, S. & Schut, R. (2016). 'Nonfatal Gun Use in Intimate Partner Violence. A Systematic Review of the Literature'. *Trauma, Violence and Abuse*. September 14, 2016.

⁴ Campo, M. & Tayton, S. (2015). *Domestic and family violence in regional, rural and remote communities*. Retrieved from: <https://aifs.gov.au/cfca/publications/domestic-and-family-violence-regional-rural-and-remote-communities>

We ask that the Committee take into account the role of firearms in men's violence against women and considers the multidisciplinary coordinated effort, including legal frameworks, that prevention of firearm injury and death requires.

Regards

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "T. McLeod".

Tracy McLeod Howe

CEO