



Te Rūnanga o Ngā Toa Āwhina submission on the Fair Pay Agreements Bill to the Education and Workforce Select Committee

19 May 2022

About Te Rūnanga o Ngā Toa Āwhina

Te Rūnanga o Ngā Toa Āwhina, the Māori arm of the PSA membership, is an integral part of New Zealand Public Service Association Te Pūkenga Here Tikanga Mahi (the PSA), the largest trade union in New Zealand with 81,000 members working across the country in public and community services.

Te Rūnanga o Ngā Toa Āwhina represents and promotes over 10, 000 Māori members of the PSA and is committed to honouring te Tiriti o Waitangi across the public sector and inside the union. Our structures ensure a Māori perspective is heard in all levels of our organisation.

This submission

This submission, developed with input from Māori PSA members, strongly supports the Bill and endorses the submissions of the New Zealand Council of Trade Unions Te Kauae Kaimahi (CTU), the CTU Runanga and the submissions of other CTU affiliated unions. This submission is a partner to the PSA submission.

This submission is also informed by the PSA's values, strategic goals, and Ngā Kaupapa o Te Rūnanga o Ngā Toa Āwhina.

Te Rūnanga o Ngā Toa Āwhina response to the Bill

Te Rūnanga o Ngā Toa Āwhina welcomes and strongly supports the establishment of a stable framework for industry-level working and employment conditions through Fair Pay Agreements that are committed to and honour Te Tiriti and its principles.

Te Rūnanga notes that the need for FPAs becomes more vital for Māori workers as the impacts of rising costs of living and interest rates increase at a concerning rate.

We believe that this bill will ensure an opportunity for fair pay for Māori workers who, on average, are paid significantly less than other workers for the same mahi.

This is even more important for Māori workers as FPAs are an integral part of a wider aim to lift wages of those on low to medium incomes given that most Māori workers are on lower wages.

We also recognise that the Fair Pay Agreements Act will form only part of the regulation of employment relations and employment standards and that the Employment Relations Act is the base for this regulatory system. However, we believe it is beyond time that employment regulation is changed to give better effect to the Crown's Te Tiriti obligations and better reflect tikanga Māori. Including reference to this in the purpose of the Fair Pay Agreements Bill would signal the start of this process of redress.

Recommendation to improve the Bill

We make the following recommendation to improve the Bill:

Give better effect to the Crown's Te Tiriti obligations and better reflect tikanga Māori

We recommend the purpose statement for the Bill include reference to "provide for an employment relations and employment standards regulatory system that better gives effect to the Crown's obligations as a treaty partner of partnership and participation". That this is a purpose of the Bill is clearly signalled in the second paragraph of the Explanatory Note which states that the current weaknesses of New Zealand labour market which are to be addressed by the Bill, include the "significant" prevalence of jobs with inadequate working conditions, low wages, and low labour productivity. For example, Māori, Pacific peoples, young people, and people with disabilities are over-represented in jobs where low pay, job security, health and safety, and upskilling are significant issues. Barriers to good labour market outcomes are particularly prevalent for people who fall within more than one of those groups."

To this effect, we strongly support the PSA recommendation of " **Clear articulation of the purpose of fair pay agreements needed in clause 3**" and endorse the Council of Trade Union's proposed new wording for the purpose in clause 3 of the Bill, in addition to what we have proposed above.

*Nāu te rourou, nāku te rourou, ka ora ai te iwi
With your food basket and my food basket the people will prosper*

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