



Lobbying Disclosure Bill Government Administration Select Committee

The Salvation Army (New Zealand, Fiji and Tonga Territory) Submission

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Salvation Army is an international Christian and social services organisation that has worked in New Zealand for over one hundred and twenty five years. The Army provides a wide range of practical social, community and faith-based services, particularly for those who are suffering, facing injustice or those who have been forgotten and marginalised by mainstream society.
- 1.2 The Salvation Army is strongly connected to the regions and communities around New Zealand. We have over 65 community ministry centres and churches (corps) across the nation serving local families and communities. We are passionately committed to our local communities as we aim to fulfil our mission of caring for people, transforming lives and reforming society through God in Christ by the Holy Spirit's power.¹ Therefore, we believe we can speak effectively to this Bill because of our commitment and track record with local communities and because of our strong relationships with territorial authorities wherever our community ministry centres and corps are located.
- 1.3 This submission has been prepared by the Social Policy and Parliamentary Unit of The Salvation Army. The Unit works towards the eradication of poverty by encouraging policies and practices that strengthen the social framework of New Zealand. The Unit provides solid social research and robust policy analysis, engaging with national opinion makers in politics, government, business, media and education.
- 1.4 This submission has been approved by Commissioner Donald Bell, the Territorial Commander of The Salvation Army's New Zealand, Fiji and Tonga Territory.
- 1.5 We would like the opportunity to publicly talk to these issues with the Government that are raised in this submission if there is such a process. Our contact details for this submission are at the end of this paper.

¹ <http://www.salvationarmy.org.nz/our-community/mission/>

2. THE SALVATION ARMY PERSPECTIVE

- 2.1 We support the provisions set out in the Supplementary Order Paper (SOP) No. 76 moved by Hon Charles Chauvel whereby the new clause 4A will be inserted to clarify the definition of 'organisation' under this Act.
- 2.2 We strongly affirm the position that, as per clause 4A(2)(a) of the SOP, organisations that pursue objects of national, patriotic, religious philanthropic, charitable, scientific, artistic, social, professional, or sporting character, should be excluded from the definition of 'organisation' for the purposes of this Act.
- 2.3 We also support, as per the SOP, that this Bill be focussed on lobbying that takes place primarily for commercial purposes.

3. RESPONSES TO SPECIFIC AMENDMENTS TO LEGISLATION

3.1 Clause 3

- We support the stated purpose of this Bill in clause 3.

3.2 Clause 6

- We agree that all those who engage in lobbying for commercial purposes, as stated by the SOP, should be registered with the Auditor-General as a formal lobbyist.
- We believe that organisations that fall within the exemption provided by clause 4A(2)(a) of the SOP should still be given the option to register as a lobbyist for the purposes of fairness and transparency *if* that organisation wishes to do so. If an organisation chooses to do this, then they become subject to the information provisions required by clause 6(3) of the Bill.

3.3 Clause 7

- We support that those organisations that fall within the definition of 'organisation' stated in the SOP should be duly subject to the provisions of clauses 7(1) to (9) of the Bill. We specifically want to affirm the requirements of the lobbying returns as detailed in subsections 7 to 9 of clause 7 of the Bill.

3.4 Clause 10

- We support clause 10 of the Bill, particularly around the availability and transparency of the lobbying information via the internet.

3.5 Clause 13

- We support clause 13 of the Bill. We volunteer ourselves as a key organisation that wishes to engage in the future development of any Code of Conduct.

3.6 Other comments

- We believe that continued diligence is required in this lobbying discussion. If the proposed amendments within the SOP are passed into legislation we believe that monitoring is needed to ensure that commercial businesses do not use the 'exemption' provided for in the SOP. That is, we want to ensure that commercial organisations do not use organisations that are excluded from the parameters of this legislation to conduct their lobbying for them without having to fulfil the obligations of reporting, investigations and registration found in the main Bill.
- We also believe that changes are needed around swipe card access into Parliament. We believe that a standard application process is needed for all those engaging in lobbying activities when applying for their swipe cards. We also believe that these access cards should be renewed on an annual basis.

4. CONCLUSION

We sincerely thank the Government Administration Select Committee for the opportunity to make this submission. We believe that lobbying is now an integral part of the democratic process in New Zealand. But we also affirm the need to monitor this area more closely, particularly around lobbying that is taking place for commercial and financial purposes.

Thank you once again and God bless.

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