

Committee Secretariat  
Government Administration Committee  
Parliament Buildings  
WELLINGTON 6140  
Submitted online

## **Rural Women New Zealand Submission on the Charities Amendment Bill**

1. Rural Women New Zealand (RWNZ) welcome the opportunity to provide a submission to the Government Administration Committee on the Charities Amendment Bill (“the Bill”).
2. RWNZ is a charitable, membership-based organisation which supports people in rural communities through opportunities, advocacy and connections. We are registered and subject to the Charities Act. Our members are diverse, but all of us share rural interests that connect and energise us. We are the leading representative body promoting and advocating on rural health, education, land and social issues. We provide information, support, practical learning and leadership opportunities.

### **RWNZ do not support proposed amendment to section 61**

3. RWNZ note that section 61 of the Bill proposes to delete the words “or the chief executive” from section 61 of the Charities Act. We are very concerned that this amendment is in fact a significant change to the Act that would prevent charities from being able to appeal to the High Court any decision made by the charities regulator (other than a registration decision).
4. The right for charities to appeal decisions of both the Board and the chief executive is an important one. Evidence of this importance can be seen by the significant number of Charities Act decisions that have been challenged through the Court in the past few years.
5. If it is indeed the intent of the government to change charities’ rights of appeal under the Act, we think there must be a fuller process of consultation and some explanation as to why this change is being made. We note that there has been little or no consultation to date, as this amendment has been progressed as a technical change under statutes amendment omnibus legislation.
6. RWNZ thank the Committee for the opportunity to submit on this Bill. Please do not hesitate to contact me using the contact details below if you would like to discuss our submission further.

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