



PSA 

OUT@PSA

## Submission on the Treaty Principles Bill

### About us

The New Zealand Public Service Association Te Pūkenga Here Tikanga Mahi (the PSA) is the largest trade union in New Zealand with over 96,000 members. We are a democratic and bicultural organisation representing people working in the Public Service, Crown agents, Crown entities, state owned enterprises, local government, tertiary education institutions, the public health sector, and non-governmental organisations working in the health, social services and community sectors.

Out@PSA is the PSA's network representing over 3,100 rainbow | āniwaniwa members across the PSA's membership. It represents the interests of rainbow | āniwaniwa workers and aims to support, promote, and empower them to ensure a safe and inclusive working environment where they can be their authentic selves.

### Feedback on the Bill

We strongly oppose the Treaty Principles Bill.

As representatives of rainbow | āniwaniwa people we stand in solidarity with tāngata whenua against a Bill that seeks to deny them rights that were promised under our founding document Te Tiriti o Waitangi. As representatives of workers who deliver public and community services governed by a range of legislation that references the treaty principles, we know that commitments to Te Tiriti make a meaningful difference to our members work, and steps towards delivering equal public services to Māori.

The Treaty Principles Bill is a "one-sided re-writing" (misinterpretation) of an agreement "without the other" (that excludes one) party. Not only is this unacceptable in terms of what it means to make an agreement in good faith and abide by it, but it also reflects a willingness on the part of this Government to make significant changes without the affected community at the table.

The Treaty Principles Bill seeks to foster racism and division, and we stand in solidarity as rainbow | āniwaniwa people and as union members against such division. We oppose a referendum that would give the majority the ability to vote away the rights of Māori or any minority group.

We strongly reject the framing that has been used by some in promoting this Bill, who say that the current state somehow confers "extra rights" to Māori and that this Bill is about ensuring equal rights for all. We know that Māori are persistently disadvantaged across almost all facets of life, and that this is the result of a long history of decisions made by a colonial administration that has failed to honour the treaty it made with rangatira in 1840.

We also recognise that the colonial history that has oppressed Māori and continues to disadvantage them in the present is the same one that has oppressed rainbow | āniwaniwa people, both Māori and non-Māori.

Te Tiriti affirmed the pre-existing rights of tāngata whenua that are based on whakapapa. Those rights belong to all Māori including takatāpui, irawhiti and all forms of indigenous āniwaniwa identities.

Honouring Te Tiriti is an important tool against oppression – not just oppression of Māori, but of all of us and of Aotearoa’s natural taonga – and towards inclusion for all.

In public and community services, a Te Tiriti-centred approach provides an alternative way of considering how best to provide services to Māori and all New Zealanders alike. For example, it requires health care providers to explore and deliver on culturally appropriate pathways that support the hauora of takatāpui and their whānau. Te Tiriti sets a foundation of values that are counter to the profit-first approach that views people and whenua as resources to be exploited and has contributed to the inequalities that disproportionately affect Māori, Pasifika, women, disabled people and rainbow | āniwaniwa people.

For further information about this submission, please contact:

Andrew McCauley  
Senior Advisor, Policy and Strategy  
New Zealand Public Service Association  
PO Box 3817  
Wellington 6140  
Phone: 027 2712642  
Email: [andrew.mccauley@psa.org.nz](mailto:andrew.mccauley@psa.org.nz)