

Media Release – Sexual Assault “Gag” Law

The Judicial Proceedings Reports Act or the “Sexual Assault Gag Law” as it’s being described must be changed as soon as Victorian Parliament next sits.

IGFF firmly believes the Andrew’s Government admission that this was an unintended legislative consequence, but until it is fixed, the trauma in the community will only worsen.

IGFF and the Reason Party MP, Fiona Patten call on the Attorney General of Victoria to ensure that this legislation is changed by the end of next week’s parliamentary sitting, to ensure it reflects the values held by the community.

Until this remedy occurs, thousands of survivors of sexual abuse, their families and supporters will have lost confidence in the justice system and the Government.

“Victorian’s have always been proud that their state led the way towards national redress and I will work with the Government to see that pride restored as quickly as possible. We need to work together as a parliament to fix this law – Victorians expect nothing less” – Fiona Patten MLC.

IGFF acknowledge that part of the journey to justice for a victim of sexual abuse, is the ability to transition to the status of ‘survivor’.

Often this can only be done when a victim is able to take ownership of their trauma and the abuse they have suffered.

After the High Court of Australia overturned the Pell convictions in March, the Premier said the following:

“We hear you. We see you. We believe you.”

What this legislation currently says to survivors is – we believe, we just don’t want you to be seen or heard.

Clare Leaney
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Clare Leaney is CEO of In Good Faith Foundation, a national charity and support service providing advocacy services to individuals, families and communities impacted by institutional abuse for over twenty years.

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