

30 January 2020

Northern Territory Legislation Scrutiny Committee  
GPO Box 3721  
Darwin NT 0801

By email: [LSC@nt.gov.au](mailto:LSC@nt.gov.au)

Dear Chair,

**Re: *Sexual Offences (Evidence and Procedure) Amendment Bill 2019 (NT)***

**Introduction.**

1. Rape & Domestic Violence Services Australia welcome the opportunity to provide a letter of support in endorsing End Rape On Campus Australia and Marque Lawyers' submission dated 29 January 2020.
2. Rape & Domestic Violence Services Australia is a non-government organisation that provides a range of trauma specialised counselling services for those who have experienced sexual, domestic and/or family violence and their supporters.<sup>1</sup>
3. Our services include the NSW Rape Crisis counselling service for people in NSW whose lives have been impacted by sexual violence; Sexual Assault Counselling Australia for people across Australia accessing the Redress Scheme resulting from the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse; and the National Domestic and Family Violence Counselling Service for Commonwealth Bank of Australia customers and staff who are seeking to escape domestic and/or family violence.

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<sup>1</sup> Generally, Rape & Domestic Violence Services Australia prefer the term *people who have experienced sexual assault and/or domestic and family violence* to describe individuals who have suffered this type of violence, rather than the terms survivors or victims. This is in acknowledgement that, although experiences of sexual assault and/or domestic and family violence are very significant in a person's life, they nevertheless do not define that person. However, in this submission, Rape & Domestic Violence Services Australia will sometimes use the term victims as this accords with the language used in the legislation.

### **Endorsement of End Rape On Campus Australia and Marque Lawyers submission.**

4. Rape & Domestic Violence Services Australia fully endorse the submission made by End Rape On Campus Australia and Marque Lawyers as to the draft legislation proposed.

### **Addressing any unintended consequences in the future.**

5. Rape & Domestic Violence Services Australia recommends that if any changes are made to the existing legislation then there be a mechanism for ongoing monitoring and evaluation of these changes. The process for ongoing monitoring should include an opportunity to examine the effectiveness of any change to the legislation and ensure that no unintended consequences have arisen.

Recommendation 1: That there be a further mechanism for ongoing monitoring and evaluation of any changes to law and legal processes, with an opportunity to examine the effectiveness of any such changes, including seeking to address any unintended consequences.

### **Conclusion.**

6. Rape & Domestic Violence Services Australia urges the Northern Territory Legislation Scrutiny Committee to consider the above and undertake to reform the law accordingly.
7. If you have any questions or would like to discuss further, please do not hesitate to contact me on (02) 8585 0333 or by email at [karenw@rape-dvservices.org.au](mailto:karenw@rape-dvservices.org.au).

Yours faithfully,

Rape and Domestic Violence Services Australia



Karen Willis

Executive Officer