

To the Legal and Constitutional Affairs of Australia

I wish to make this my submission to the Committee regarding the Mandatory Sentencing of pedophiles convicted of an offence against minors.

I, like most Australians have been only too aware of the heinous crimes committed against young children, infants and young adults by people (pedophiles) they trusted.

This practice has been happening for many decades and has been largely covered up, particularly by Organizations including Catholic and Jehovah's Witnesses, to mention just two but there are many more religious denominations and other institutions that for many different reasons chose to hide the facts rather than report the offender.

I know for example in the Jehovah's Witness organization victims and their families were told if they reported the offence; it would make the Jehovah's Organization look bad; being more concerned with reputation rather than being concerned with the victim. In many cases the family was threatened with being dis-fellowshipped; something all Jehovah's Witnesses fear.

The reason Jehovah's Witnesses fear being dis-fellowshipped is because members are told the Organization is God's only channel. In other words if they are removed from the Organization then their hope of any possible salvation is gone.

I feel mandatory sentencing together with therapy is what is needed for the perpetrators on a first offence and far lengthier sentencing for further offences.

Yours sincerely,

Garry Leicester