

December 19th, 2024

SUBMISSION ON THE PRINCIPLES OF THE TREATY OF WAITANGI BILL

Te Rau Herenga o Aotearoa The Library and Information Association of Aotearoa New Zealand (LIANZA) has provided leadership to the wider library and information profession for over 122 years.

This bill, if passed, will undermine the rights that Māori held before European contact, reaffirmed under He Whakaputanga 1835 and Te Tiriti o Waitangi 1840. Furthermore, we believe the submission process is disingenuous at worst and tokenistic at best.

LIANZA does not support the Principles of the Treaty of Waitangi Bill.

LIANZA rejects the overarching objectives for creating this bill and believes that it will have the opposite effect.

The drafting of this bill has already initiated social division in Aotearoa New Zealand and will further muddy any understanding of the intent and principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi. This bill will negatively impact Māori socially, economically, and culturally, as evidenced by the Hunn Report of 1961 and current Māori statistics, which mirror its findings.

Te Tiriti o Waitangi is a contract between two sovereign nations, signed in 1840 by Rangatira Māori on behalf of Aotearoa, a sovereign nation as determined by He Whakaputanga 1835, and the British Crown. Modern interpretations of Te Tiriti o Waitangi are often incorrect, disregard academic dialogue, critical discussion and linguistic expertise. The interpretations also fail to consider historical, cultural and contextual factors at the formation of Te Tiriti, thereby oversimplifying and misrepresenting its principles and intentions.

This Bill will weaken the already tenuous relationship between Māori and the Crown, impacting existing judicial law, statutes and precedents. It also contravenes international law in which the indigenous version takes precedence over other translations.

Libraries in Aotearoa New Zealand respect and do their best to uphold and honour Te Tiriti o Waitangi through its commitment to support and provide valued services to Māori. This foundational document supports libraries in creating and maintaining excellent, trusted relationships with their communities, delivering positive social and economic outcomes.



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