

Human Rights (Women in Armed Forces) Amendment Bill

Member's Bill

Explanatory note

The purpose of this Bill is to remove an exemption that allows discrimination to prevent women from serving in combat positions of the Armed Forces. The exemption is no longer valid, is not used, and its removal will enable New Zealand to ratify its obligations under the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

New Zealand is a signatory to CEDAW. The Convention permits ratification subject to reservations, provided that the reservations are not incompatible with the object and purpose of the Convention.

New Zealand has a reservation relating to women in armed combat. However, women are now able to be deployed to combat and other operations units, and section 33 of the Human Rights Act 1993 needs to be repealed so the reservation can be lifted.

Clause by clause analysis

Clause 1 is the Title.

Clause 2 provides for the Bill to come into force on the day after the date on which it receives the Royal assent.

Clause 3 states that the Human Rights Act 1993 is the principal Act.

Clause 4 sets out the purpose of the Bill.

Clause 5 repeals section 33 of the principal Act.

Lynne Pillay

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The Parliament of New Zealand enacts as follows:

- 1 Title**
This Act is the Human Rights (Women in Armed Forces) Amendment Act **2006**.
- 2 Commencement**
This Act comes into force on the day after the date on which it receives the Royal assent. 5
- 3 Principal Act amended**
This Act amends the Human Rights Act 1993.
- 4 Purpose**
The purpose of this Act is to amend the Human Rights Act 1993 to remove an exemption allowing discrimination against women that prevents them from serving in combat positions as New Zealand no longer prevents women from serving at the front line. 10
- 5 Section 33 repealed** 15
Section 33 is repealed.