



Youth Work Ireland

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Press Release
Youth Work Ireland
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“Government Needs to do Better on Child Protection Legislation in this Dail Session, some Commitments not Honoured go Back 6 Years” Says Leading Organisation

Youth Work Ireland has expressed disappointment that several bills relating to child protection issues did not get sufficient priority from Government in the previous Dail session despite commitments given. The organisation believes that the Children’s First Bill and Vetting Bureau Bill should be absolute priorities. The group has also drawn attention to the continuing absence of a bill to address the issue of Strict Liability and Statutory Rape emerging for the cc case which was promised in 2006! The organisation believes that it might be more appropriate to give commitments on legislation when sufficient work has been done by the parliamentary draftsman’s office or to publish heads of bills sooner.

“Everybody accepts that our child protection system needs improvement and there are key pieces of legislation that are required for this to happen. There is no delay in bringing in laws related to the Troika deal or other economic areas, we believe child protection should receive the same level of attention. After every report showing up child protection failings we are promised immediate responses but in the legislative field these seem to take forever. A new system of Garda Vetting has been promised for years but recently staff in the unit have been let go. Similarly improved legislation on Strict Liability in statutory rape cases was promised after the CC case which is nearly six years ago” Said Michael Mc Loughlin of Youth Work Ireland

“In many of these cases expert groups or Oireachtas Committees have done much of the work and all that is left is the actual drafting of the bills. In the case of Soft Information child law expert Geoffrey Shannon produced a major report for the Oireachtas Committee on the Children’s Referendum which set out in detail the issues involved in balancing the respective rights at play. Similarly Prof. Finbarr Mc Auley, the leading expert in the field, produced a report on Strict Liability for the same committee covering the issues involved. Three current cabinet ministers were members of this committee so should be well familiar with the issues. These are important issues for children and young people in Ireland today and the Governments legislative programme and actual bills introduced must reflect this in the new Dail session” Mc Loughlin added

ENDS

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