



Youth Work Ireland

**Press Release
Youth Work Ireland
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“Government Must Produce Promised Reform of Statutory Rape Legislation Following Supreme Court Ruling, Five Years on From Infamous CC Case” Says Leading Youth Organisation

Youth Work Ireland today called on the Government to urgently produce either legislation or a constitutional referendum on the issue of strict liability following the Supreme Court Decision to strike down another section of the 1935 Criminal Justice Act. The infamous CC case in 2006 involving similar action by the courts led to a major outcry and the establishment of an Oireachtas Committee. This Committee and a following Committee on the Children’s Referendum both made several recommendations on how to resolve the situation. While there has been some debate on the merits of different approaches there has simply been no movement on this issue for several years the organisation claimed. Youth Work Ireland pointed out that several Government Ministers were members of these Oireachtas Committees and were well aware of the issues.

“This Supreme Court ruling unfortunately shows up one of the critical failures in the states approach to child protection. While a number of well researched and debated reports have been produced there still has been no action in an area of major public concern. Many people will remember the outcry in 2006 over the CC Case however today we see another similar case but there has been no response by Government. The Oireachtas Committee established in 2006 and the following Committee on the Children’s Referendum examined the issues in detail and included Ministers Howlin, Shatter and Fitzgerald. The second committee did not form a unanimous view but at this stage it is a matter of some progress being better than none. It is high time there were some legislative or constitutional proposals emanating from Government” said Michael Mc Loughlin of Youth Work Ireland

“The issue of strict liability and statutory rape is a not an easy one and raises several complex questions. However we need to have a system that puts the interest of children first. The respective Oireachtas Committees put a lot of work in to this issue and had expert reports by such eminent people as Professor Finbarr Mc Auley produced. It is now a matter of political will to make progress on the issue. Even if there is disagreement on the need for a referendum the legislative proposals contained in the Committee on the Children’s Referendum should be progressed as a start and other issues can be examined by the forthcoming Constitutional Convention” Mc Loughlin added

ENDS

415 words

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