

Press Release
Youth Work Ireland
Press Release
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“Government’s Latest Commitment on Vetting and Soft Information After Cloyne Report Welcome, but Progress to Date on this has Been Very Poor” Says Leading Youth Organisation

Youth Work Ireland has today welcomed the commitment for the Government to produce a critical piece of child protection legislation which has been recommended several times including by the Joint Committee on the Referendum on Children several years ago. The youth organisation, which currently processes thousands of Garda Vetting applications every year, has criticised the failure of the Government to progress the National Vetting Bureau Bill in the past. At the start of this Dail session the bill remained listed as one of those which have yet to have heads agreed. This means it was effectively at the bottom of the legislative ladder according to the group.

“In September 2008 the Joint Committee on the Referendum on Children produced a report solely on this issue. The report was unanimous. It recommended producing this legislation in the Dail session which expired in December 2008! To date it has remained rooted to the bottom of the Governments legislative agenda. It should also be born in mind that this committee was established in 2007, with the legislation promised in 2010 it seems fair for those doing frontline work with children and young people to question whether there has been any sense of urgency about these matters. It also raises serious issues about the effectiveness of the Joint Oireachtas Committee method of dealing with such issues” said Michael Mc Loughlin of Youth Work Ireland

“Any organisation engaging a large amount of staff doing forntline work with children appreciates the need to have the highest standards of protection in place. Voluntary and community organisations want these protections in place but it has been Government inaction in the past which has prevented it happening. The Joint Oireachtas Committee commisioned a report from child law expert Geoffrey Shannon in this area which gave a strong basis to the need for a robust system of “soft information” which respects the rights of all. Given that the Joint Committee felt there was no need for a referendum in this area legislation is all the more important. Our system of vetting lacks this provision which is presnet in the UK and Northern Ireland which makes action all the more urgent” Mc Loughlin added

ENDS

387 words

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