



# STUART GRIMLEY MP

Member for Western Victoria  
State Leader of Derryn Hinch's Justice Party

## MEDIA RELEASE



Friday 7<sup>th</sup> February 2020

### **Grimley Raises Concern of High Withdrawals of Sexual Abuse Cases**

State Leader of Derryn Hinch's Justice Party Stuart Grimley has raised the high – and growing – number of sexual assault cases which are withdrawn in Victoria each year.

Mr Grimley asked the Police Minister to outline the circumstances where “victims of sexual crimes don't have to be involved in criminal proceedings after their statement has been given to police”, in order to reduce the number of cases withdrawn.

In his speech to Parliament, Mr Grimley said that victims were being let down by Victoria's inadequate support framework for those who have been affected by sexual crimes.

A former Sexual Offences and Child Abuse Investigation Teams (SOCIT) detective, Mr Grimley has seen a number of instances where sexual crimes such as rape are not pursued by victims in court. The reasons for this include lengthy court trials and often traumatic and unrelenting cross-examination that leaves victims feeling violated once more.

Mr Grimley quoted many harrowing statistics in his speech including a recently published ABC Report which estimated one-in-four complaints were withdrawn in Victoria's courts in 2018. He also mentioned that of the 12,956 sexual offences in Victoria in 2016, more than 20% - or over 2,500 cases - were withdrawn.

Of more concern, Mr Grimley spoke of the 4,416 rape cases reported in 2016 and that over 2,000 of those never made it to court.

Mr Grimley hopes to give a bigger voice to victims, rather than their perpetrators, which he has identified as a huge problem in Victoria's court system.

### **Quotes Attributable to Stuart Grimley MP:**

“It is becoming increasingly evident that there is currently an inadequate framework to support victims of sexual assault in pursuing charges, leading to them being dropped. This means offenders are getting away with crimes and remaining on the streets to possibly assault other victims.

We need to find out exactly why sexual assault cases are being withdrawn in Victoria in order to bring more perpetrators to justice.

An alarming reason provided by victims for withdrawing their complaint was because of the huge burden placed on already fragile victims thoroughly lengthy court battles.

Although there are already court support services in place to support victims, it is clearly not enough going by the recently released figures of complaints being withdrawn.

I look forward to the Minister's response regarding how victims of sexual crimes can avoid being part of cross examination and the arduous court process.”

#### **Media Contact:**

Olivia Nicholls  
0459 419 755  
olivia.nicholls@parliament.vic.gov.au