



STUART GRIMLEY MP

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

MEDIA RELEASE



Third time Strikes a Balance for #LetUsSpeak Legislation

8 September 2021

State leader of Derryn Hinch's Justice Party, Stuart Grimley MP, has supported the Victorian Government's latest amendments to the Judicial Proceedings Reports Bill 2021 (JPRA Bill) whilst noting the distress JPRA changes have made to the sexual assault survivor community (as well as victims and their families) since February 2020.

This Bill reverses the changes made in a Bill passed in November 2020 that required deceased victims' families to get a court order to name their loved ones. That Bill sought to fix an issue in an earlier February 2020 Bill that had an unintended consequence of silencing victim-survivors from naming themselves in respect of their sexual assault.

Instead, this JPRA Bill gives families the choice to put in place a Victim Privacy Order (VPO) for their deceased loved ones.

Derryn Hinch's Justice Party introduced an amendment that would allow other family members to support or object to a VPO application and share the views on how a VPO application would affect them.

The well-publicised #LetUsSpeak campaign was the driving force behind this much needed change. All victim-survivors, and most Victorians for that matter, were extremely disappointed that it had taken the government so long to rectify the issue.

Mr Grimley welcomes the JPRA Bill so families can name their deceased loved ones by right, without having to obtain a court order – as Mr Grimley knows as a former SOCIT Detective, the court process can be extremely arduous and emotional. These changes also promote the de-stigmatising of sexual assaults.

Quotes Attributable to Stuart Grimley MP:

"Finally, victim-survivors and their families are free to tell their stories without the fear of being prosecuted.

"The Bill removes the mandate for victims' families to need to get a court order to name their loved ones. This was something the Upper House vehemently opposed during debate last November. The Bill will also establish a new scheme for Victim Privacy Orders (or VPOs).

"VPOs allow a person with 'sufficient interest' to suppress the name of a person in the context of being a victim of sexual assault. The Bill isn't overly clear on what constitutes sufficient interest, but I do hope courts will exercise common sense when interpreting who can and can't try to suppress information. We welcome the clear direction in the Bill that perpetrators can't apply for a VPO.

"It has been extremely disappointing that it has taken so long to rectify this major issue. Victim-survivors are already put through terrible pain and suffering; not allowing them, or their families, to express themselves in the public forum was very disappointing.

"Derryn Hinch's Justice Party will always speak up on behalf of victims of crime. It is imperative that victims' rights are put before their perpetrators. We will continue to fight for a fairer justice system."

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