

Submission on the Regulatory Standards Bill
From: YouthLaw Aotearoa – Youth Project Team (YPT)
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The Youth Project Team (YPT) of YouthLaw Aotearoa opposes the proposed Regulatory Standards Bill (RSB). As a rōpū of young people aged 16 to 25 from across Tāmaki Makaurau—including Christchurch, Howick, Manurewa, Manukau, Botany, and Central Auckland, we bring diverse perspectives shaped by lived experiences of disability, housing insecurity, migration, and systemic discrimination. Our group includes both tangata whenua and tangata tiriti and operates both as an autonomous youth-led initiative and an internal advisory body to YouthLaw.

We reject the RSB in its entirety.

Young people will inherit the systems and structures being reshaped right now. The rules set today will determine whether we're dealing with more climate disasters, housing crises, and inequality tomorrow; or whether we are building a country that values care, community, and justice. We are not just observers. We are future leaders, voters, and decision-makers. Many of us are already politically engaged and watching closely. When governments sideline our voices, especially on long-term issues, it signals a disregard for the people who will be most affected. We are here now and we will remember who showed up for us.

Our Concerns

1. Consultation Has Been Tokenistic and Inaccessible
This consultation was rushed and inaccessible. We know of no effort to seek out rangatahi voice, despite young people being among the most affected by decisions made today. Our generation will live with the consequences of regulatory failure the longest, and yet we were not invited into this kōrero meaningfully.
2. The Bill Centralises Power in a Single Minister
As young people in Aotearoa, many of us come from diaspora communities who have lived under corrupt governments or are tangata whenua impacted by colonisation. We know what it looks like when one person or party has too much power. This Bill gives excessive discretion to the Minister of Regulation, including the power to appoint the Regulatory Standards Board, define what counts as good regulation, and decide which laws are reviewed.
3. Private Profit is Prioritised Over People and the Environment
The principles of the Bill overemphasise private property and economic costs, while sidelining social and environmental wellbeing. We know from experience how exploitative private companies can be, particularly in the housing market, disability

services, and climate-related industries. Our futures should not be sacrificed to protect corporate profits or speculative property values.

4. No Justification or Evidence for the Bill's Approach

The government has not provided clear evidence of a problem that this Bill addresses. The existing regulatory impact systems may need improvement, but there has been no case made for such a heavy-handed, bureaucratic, and expensive legislative fix. The Regulatory Impact Statement itself doesn't justify the need for this Bill.

What We Know from Lived Experience

Collectively, we know what it's like to:

- Live in poverty and see how bad regulation (or no regulation) worsens our struggles.
- Be displaced, unheard, or excluded from decisions that affect us.
- Watch as the justice system criminalises instead of supports.
- See disabled friends and whānau struggle without access or protection.

What We Stand For

As rangatahi, we envision a future where laws and policies reflect:

- Sustainability and care for Te Taiao – The climate crisis is already impacting our lives.
- Genuine equity – Equitable solutions for equality of outcomes.
- Transparent, democratic process – Including genuine consultation with our communities.
- Māori sovereignty and partnership – embedded in Te Tiriti, not sidelined in legislative design.

Conclusion

This Bill does not reflect our values, our hopes for a fair Aotearoa, or the kind of lawmaking this country needs. It is an attack on transparency, accountability, and equity. It is an unnecessary and dangerous consolidation of power that fails to uphold democratic processes, meaningful consultation, or protections for our communities and the environment. It puts private profit ahead of public good and represents a backwards step for Aotearoa.

We urge you to withdraw this Bill.