

23 May 2017

Hon Christopher Finlayson QC, Attorney-General

Consistency with New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990: Local Electoral (Equitable Process for Establishing Māori Wards and Māori Constituencies) Amendment Bill

1. We have considered whether the Local Electoral (Equitable Process for Establishing Māori Wards and Māori Constituencies) Amendment Bill ('the Bill'), a member's Bill in the name of Marama Davidson MP, is consistent with the rights and freedoms affirmed in the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990 ('the Bill of Rights Act').
2. The Bill amends the Local Electoral Act 2001 to make the process by which territorial authorities and regional councils can establish Māori wards and Māori constituencies the same as the process by which they can establish general wards and constituencies. It requires territorial authorities and regional councils to consider, at least once every six years, whether to establish Māori wards and Māori constituencies. It also removes the current requirement for a poll on whether to establish a Māori ward or Māori constituency if five per cent of electors request such a poll.
3. We have concluded that the Bill appears to be consistent with the rights and freedoms affirmed in the Bill of Rights Act.

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