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## **ADOPTION ACTION SUPPORTS REFORM OF NZ'S OUTDATED ADOPTION LAWS**

**Adoption Action supports the initiative by Kevin Hague MP and Nikki Kaye MP to get the issue of adoption reform back onto the parliamentary agenda through a Member's Bill.**

**New Zealand's Adoption Act was passed 57 years ago and is widely seen as being out of touch with contemporary social attitudes and values. The Law Commission in 2000 made over 100 recommendations for change. Twelve years on, none of these have been implemented, despite the Ministry of Justice having made detailed recommendations as to the changes needed. While much of the publicity has been around gay adoption, there are many other aspects of the Act that are in urgent need of reform.**

**The Act has been criticised by the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child and New Zealand's Human Rights Commission as not sufficiently protecting the rights of children and as containing a number of provisions which breach our anti-discrimination laws.**

**Successive governments have over the last two decades given assurances that they are moving to implement major reform, but nothing has been done (see attached chronology).**

**Adoption Action is committed to making the best interests of the child the paramount consideration in adoption, ensuring fully informed consent and openness in adoption, and doing away with discriminatory provisions. Its members include persons who have had personal experience of adoption and professionals with specialist knowledge and experience of adoption law and practice.**

**Adoption Action last year filed proceedings with the Human Rights Review Tribunal claiming that the Adoption Act:**

- is inconsistent with the anti-discrimination provisions of the Human Rights Act 1993 and the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990 in 12 respects
  - breaches the fundamental rights and freedoms of the persons affected.
- It is anticipated that the claim will be heard by the Tribunal next year.

For further information and comment see attached chronology contact:

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See also attached chronology summarising the failure of government to act on recommendations re adoption reform.