



Submission to the Finance and Expenditure Committee On the Regulatory Standards Bill

From: Paora Stanley, CEO – Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Te Rangi Iwi Trust
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Introduction

E ngā mana nui, e ngā reo karanga o ngā hau e whā, tēnei te karanga o Ngāi Te Rangi ki a koutou.

As the Chief Executive of Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Te Rangi Iwi Trust, I write with a clear and resolute voice to **oppose** the Regulatory Standards Bill. This Bill, if passed in its current form, would **cut across the manawa of Te Tiriti o Waitangi**, undermine the place of **tikanga Māori in Aotearoa's constitutional fabric**, and embolden attacks on the **hard-won redress and rights** of tangata whenua.

This submission is not made lightly. It is made on behalf of generations who fought for recognition. It is made with the weight of history behind us, and with fierce determination for those who will come after us.

To be clear this is not written by a BOT as I suspect ACTors party is more overly doing themselves on submissions that are trying to undermine yet again, Māori sovereignty.

We call on this Committee to:

- Immediately **halt** the progress of this Bill;
- Undertake **genuine, Treaty-based engagement** with Māori, not tokenistic consultation;
- Amend the Bill to **explicitly uphold Te Tiriti o Waitangi** as a core constitutional and legal principle.

Summary of Position

We strongly oppose this Bill on the grounds that:

- It **erases** any reference to Te Tiriti o Waitangi or the Crown's constitutional obligations to Māori;
- It **entrenches Western legal ideologies**—individualism, contract, and market freedom—over the **collective rights, tikanga, and rangatiratanga** of hapū and iwi;
- It **creates new legal mechanisms** that could be used to dismantle or delegitimise Māori redress (e.g., co-governance, resource rights, tikanga-based legislation);
- It **ignores** the findings of the Waitangi Tribunal, which rightly called for its suspension and urgent Treaty-consistent reform.

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Key Concerns

a. Absence of Te Tiriti o Waitangi

The complete omission of Te Tiriti is not just an oversight — **it is a constitutional insult**. This Bill seeks to create a new legal framework **without reference to the founding document of this nation**. In doing so, it breaches both the letter and the spirit of the Crown’s duty to actively protect Māori rights.

It contradicts current legislation that rightly centres Treaty principles, including:

- Section 4, **Conservation Act 1987**
- **Public Service Act 2020**
- **Resource Management Act** and its successors

Such an omission cannot be allowed to stand.

b. Imposition of Western Legal Ideology over Tikanga Māori

This Bill elevates regulatory principles such as:

- Freedom of contract
- Property rights
- Minimal government interference — all of which reflect **Western political orthodoxy**, not the **realities of Māori legal tradition**.

Tikanga Māori is law. It is recognised by our courts, our whānau, and our Treaty. The Bill’s failure to acknowledge tikanga, kawa, and the mana of hapū and iwi is a deliberate move to **exclude Māori knowledge and leadership** from the future of this country.

c. Weaponisation of Legal Tools Against Māori Redress

Under this Bill, any law inconsistent with these new “standards” could be subjected to scrutiny or judicial review. That means:

- **Co-governance arrangements could be challenged**
- **Environmental protections underpinned by Māori values could be weakened**
- **Māori broadcasting, health, fisheries, and whenua legislation could be undermined** by actors who claim they breach “market fairness” or “individual liberty”





This is **not** accountability. This is erasure by stealth.

Recommendations

We call on the Committee to take the following actions:

1. **Withdraw the Bill entirely** due to its constitutional deficiencies and lack of Māori engagement.
2. If the Bill is to proceed at all, then it must:
 - Include an **explicit commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi** as a foundational and guiding principle;
 - Require that all regulatory assessments **account for tikanga Māori**, hapū rangatiratanga, and all existing Treaty settlements;
 - Include a mandatory **Mana Whenua Impact Statement** for all legislation assessed under the proposed standards.
3. Establish an **Independent Māori Regulatory Oversight Board** — with iwi, hapū, and Māori legal experts — to vet all legislation and regulations from a Treaty and tikanga perspective. This Board must have equal standing to any proposed Regulatory Standards Board.

Conclusion

Te Tiriti o Waitangi is not optional. It is not symbolic. It is constitutional.

This Bill represents a dangerous step backwards — one that risks entrenching colonial legal supremacy under the guise of regulatory "clarity." We will not stand by while our Treaty, our rights, our tikanga, and our futures are sidelined.

If the Crown intends to reset the rules of legislation, then those rules must begin — not end — with Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

Nāku nā,

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