



Hon. Carmel Sepuloni  
Minister Disability Issues  
Freepost Parliament  
Private Bag 18 888  
Parliament Buildings  
Wellington 6160

8<sup>th</sup> December 2021

## Re: Disability Systems Transformation / Accessibility for New Zealanders Bill

Tenā koe Minister Sepuloni,

The New Zealand Disability Employers' Network (NZDEN) is a network of employers committed to our shared vision – “New Zealand organisations realise the true potential of disabled and neurodiverse people, to the benefit of all”.

The NZDEN consists of 30 organisations representing approximately 4 percent of New Zealand's jobs, and growing all the time. The NZDEN is recognised as New Zealand's representative with the International Labour Organisation's Global Business and Disability Network. Our members are committed to establishing shared good practice around disability inclusion and accessibility from a New Zealand employer's perspective, ultimately seeing more disabled people in meaningful careers.

May we start by congratulating yourself and Minister Little on your recent announcement for Disability Systems Transformation and the Accessibility for New Zealanders Bill. The NZDEN called a meeting on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> November to review and discuss the available information and agreed that we are broadly supportive of the intent and direction outlined.

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### **Ministry for Disabled People**

We know that the establishment of a Ministry for Disabled People has been long desired by the disability community. We stand alongside them in welcoming the creation of the Ministry.

We are available to bring the employers unique perspective at any time during the creation of the Ministry for Disabled People, and look forward to establishing a positive working relationship with it.

### **Enabling Good Lives**

The success in New Zealand trials for Enabling Good Lives, and of similar programmes overseas, leads us to have confidence that these changes will be great at empowering disabled people to lead the life that they choose.



The NZDEN are watching with interest how this will impact on the Supported Employment Providers and their working relationship with employers, and request to be consulted on any changes prior to them being locked in. There is an opportunity here to make a system that works better for all.

### **Accessibility for New Zealanders Bill / Accessibility Governance Board**

Of course, the Accessibility for New Zealanders Bill and establishment of the Accessibility Governance Board is of great interest to us.

During our meeting on the 17<sup>th</sup> November, our members were briefed and discussed the available information and commentary from the announcement, Accelerating Accessibility in New Zealand cabinet paper and Regulatory Impact Statement: Accelerating Accessibility.

The NZDEN see it as an imperative that employers/businesses are actively engaged in the design, implementation and on-going monitoring of government systems and legislation that relate to them.

Collectively and as individual organisations we are looking forward to seeing the full detail of the Accessibility for New Zealanders Bill, and participating in the consultation process.

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We know that employers have a vital role to play in positive disability outcomes. As the leading employer body in New Zealand solely committed to improving career outcomes for disabled people, disability inclusion and accessibility, we ask to be fully engaged in the creation of the new Ministry, drafting of the legislation and creation of the Accessibility Governance Board.

By the Government including the NZDEN as a partner in this process and future systems, we can ensure that any final systems and legislation will work for both disabled people, our members, and other NZ employers, leading to positive outcomes for all.

Nāku iti noa, nā

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