

[environment@parliament.govt.nz](mailto:environment@parliament.govt.nz)

28 November 2022

Tēnā koe Hon. Eugenie Sage, Chairperson of the Environment Select Committee

**Request for submission deadline extension for the Natural and Built Environment and Spatial Planning Bills**

Taituarā and LGNZ are pleased the highly anticipated Natural and Built Environment and Spatial Planning Bills are moving through the Parliamentary process. The need to change our resource management system is widely acknowledged and these Bills represent a once in a generation opportunity to improve how we plan for development and protect the environment.

Given the importance of this legislation we **respectfully request that the deadline for submissions is extended** to enable local government and local democratic input.

The role of local government in ensuring a smooth transition to the new system and its future effectiveness cannot be underestimated. It is therefore important that the Government takes councils on this journey with it and ensures all councils and their elected members have sufficient time to understand the implications of the reform and can provide informed, constructive feedback on the Bills to enable their future success.

While the direction of travel for the reforms has been signalled for a number of years, there has been significant elected member turn over following the recent local government elections and most councils are still in an intensive period of elected member induction. This includes other pressing Government reform priorities such as three waters, as well as preparing for challenging annual planning conversations with communities. This is occurring against a backdrop of capacity issues within councils, unprecedented workloads and the need to build trust and cohesion with and within communities. In addition, many Councils do not have Council meetings scheduled in January.

An extension to the timeframe would enable all councils to come up to speed and ensure that council submissions are considered, address practical implementation issues as well political concerns, and are signed off and owned by the elected Council.

While we realise the Committee and the Government are working to tight timeframes, we consider that a reform of this significance – one that affects all aspects of the environment we treasure, the essentials of life (from clean air and water to housing), the Treaty relationship, business and the economy - requires the maximum opportunity for

consideration and input from the sector that will largely be responsible for implementing it and ensuring its success.

Thank you for your consideration. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.

Ngā mihi nui,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sanchia Jacobs".

Sanchia Jacobs

President

Taituarā

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "S.A. Crosby".

Stuart Crosby

President

Local Government New Zealand