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Crown Response to the Abuse in Care Inquiry

COVERSHEET

Minister	Hon Erica Stanford	Portfolio	Lead Coordination Minister for the Government's Response to the Royal Commission's Report into Historical Abuse in State Care and in the Care of Faith-based Institutions
Title of Cabinet paper	Government response to the Petition of Scott Savage	Date to be published	17 December 2025

List of documents that have been proactively released		
Date	Title	Author
26 June 2025	Government response to the Petition of Scott Savage	Crown Response Office
26 June 2025	Government response to the Petition of Scott Savage LEG-25-MIN-0117	Cabinet Office
30 June 2025	Report of the Cabinet Legislation Committee: Period Ended 27 June 2025 CAB-25-MIN-0220	Cabinet Office

Withholding grounds

Documents have been released in full

Notes

- An associated briefing titled *Response to the Petition of Scott Savage to the Petitions Committee regarding redress payment amounts* has been proactively released and can be found [here](#).
- Due to an administrative error, the Department of Corrections were not consulted during the drafting of the Cabinet Paper titled *Government response to the Petition of Scott Savage*.
- The Petition of Scott Savage can be found on the Parliament website [here](#).

Office of the Lead Coordination Minister for the Government's Response to the Royal Commission's Report into Historical Abuse in State Care and in the Care of Faith-based Institutions

Chair, Cabinet Legislation Committee

Government response to the Petition of Scott Savage

Proposal

- 1 This paper seeks approval of the Government's response to the Petition of Scott Savage: Abuse in Care survivor pay-outs to be \$3.5m per survivor (the Petition).

Background

- 2 The Petitions Committee received the Petition, which calls for survivors of abuse and neglect in state care to receive the sum of \$3.5m in redress.
- 3 On 3 April 2025, the Petitions Committee referred the Petition to the Government for a response.

Comment on the Petition

- 4 The Petition asks that the House of Representatives urge the Government to pay each survivor, and the families of each survivor who is no longer living, \$3.5m each for the abuse experienced while in the care of the State. It received eight signatures of support.
- 5 The Petitions Committee referred the Petition to the Lead Coordination Minister for the Government's Response to the Royal Commission's Report into Historical Abuse in State Care and in the Care of Faith-based Institutions (the Lead Minister) in accordance with Standing Order 380.
- 6 The Government responds to the Petition in the context of Government decisions for redress for survivors of historical abuse and neglect in care which were announced on 9 May 2025.

Timing of the Government response

- 7 The Government response must be presented to the House by Friday 4 July 2025.

Consultation

- 8 This paper and the response to the Petition were consulted with agencies involved in the redress system for abuse and neglect in care. They are the Ministries of Health, Education and Social Development, the Department of Corrections, Te Puni Kōkiri and Oranga Tamariki. The Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet and the Treasury were informed.

Financial implications

9 This paper has no financial implications.

Publicity

10 No public communications will be made on the response to the Petition.

Proactive Release

11 I propose to proactively release this paper subject to redaction as appropriate under the Official Information Act 1982.

Recommendations

I recommend that the Cabinet Legislation Committee:

- 1 **approve** the attached Government response to the Petition of Scott Savage: Abuse in Care survivor pay-outs to be \$3.5m;
- 2 **invite** the Lead Minister to present the Government response to the House in accordance with Standing Order 380; and
- 3 **note** that a copy of the response will be forwarded to the petitioner on presentation by the Clerk of the Petitions Committee.

Authorised for lodgement

Hon Erica Stanford
Lead Coordination Minister for the Government's Response to the Royal Commission's Report into Historical Abuse in State Care and in the Care of Faith-based Institutions

**Government Response to
the Petition of Scott Savage: Abuse in Care survivor pay-outs to be
\$3.5m**

Presented to the House of Representatives

In accordance with Standing Order 380

Government response to the Petition of Scott Savage: Abuse in Care survivor pay-outs to be \$3.5m

Introduction

- 1 The Government has received and considered the Petition of Scott Savage (the Petition), which was referred to the Government for a response on 3 April 2025. The Petition asks that the House of Representatives urge the Government to pay each survivor, and the families of each survivor who is no longer living, \$3.5m each for the abuse experienced while in the care of the State.
- 2 The Government responds to the Petition in accordance with Standing Order 380, and in the context of decisions for redress for survivors of abuse and neglect in State care announced on 9 May 2025. Information about the announcements can be found on the Crown Response Office website.

Government response

- 3 The Royal Commission into Historical Abuse in State Care and in the Care of Faith-based Institutions (the Royal Commission) detailed the widespread and sometimes extreme abuse and neglect of children, young people, and adults, across a wide range of care settings. These included disability, mental health, social services and educational settings, and community and faith-based care.
- 4 The Royal Commission's reports, information from its hearings, interviews with survivors and others, and documentary evidence, provide the basis for the recommendations that are set out in its:
 - 4.1 2021 redress report, *He Purapura Ora, He Māra Tipu from Redress to Pūretumu Torowhānui* (He Purapura Ora)
 - 4.2 2024 final report *Whanaketia – Through pain and trauma, from darkness to light Whakairihia ki te tihi o Maungārongo* (Whanaketia).
- 5 In response to the Royal Commission, the Prime Minister and seven public sector agency leaders formally apologised to survivors of abuse and neglect in care on 12 November 2024. In his apology, the Prime Minister acknowledged specifically that torture occurred at Lake Alice Psychiatric Hospital Child and Adolescent Unit. The apologies made can be found online on the Crown Response Office website.
- 6 The Prime Minister also announced an investment of \$32 million to increase capacity in current redress and claims systems from approximately 1350 to 1550 claims per year. He also announced a \$2 million dual purpose survivor-focussed fund for local authorities, non-governmental organisations and community groups and an annual day of reflection on the one-year anniversary of the public apology, 12 November 2025.
- 7 In December 2025, we announced details of a new redress scheme for Lake Alice torture survivors. It includes a financial payment, a new written apology which explicitly acknowledges torture and support to access to support and

rehabilitative services. Eligible Lake Alice survivors can choose an expedited payment of \$150,000 or choose an individual payment pathway. Through the independent pathway, their claim will be independently assessed by an independent arbiter who will determine final payment amounts within an envelope established by Ministers.

- 8 On 9 May 2025, as Lead Coordination Minister for the Government's Response to the Royal Commission's Report into Historical Abuse in State Care and in the Care of Faith-based Institutions, I announced details of Government decisions relating to redress for survivors of abuse and neglect in state care and a \$533 million redress package.
- 9 The State redress system will continue to provide a safe, supportive environment for survivors to share their experiences; facilitate acknowledgements and apologies for abuse in care; facilitate access to care records, support services, legal supports and acknowledgement payments. It will enable redress agencies to share insights on systemic issues relevant to abuse in care and the harms experienced.
- 10 In addition, the Government has decided to:
 - increase the average redress payment for survivors of abuse in State care (from \$19,180 to \$30,000);
 - enable survivors with previously settled claims to access a fixed top-up payment worth 50% of the value of their initial payment that does not involve reopening or reassessing of their claim;
 - deliver further increases in capacity for claims processing to at least 2,000 claims per year from 2026/27, increasing to 2,150 from 2027/28;
 - enable an independent review of redress decisions where survivors are unhappy with the outcome of their claim; and
 - establish a new Ministerial advisory group to provide an opportunity for input and engagement on the implementation of changes.
- 11 Redress payments are only available to living survivors or to the whānau of survivors who lodged a claim before their passing. This policy remains unchanged and was reaffirmed by Ministers.
- 12 The Government's decisions respond to many of the redress recommendations in He Purapura Ora and Whanaketia. They are part of the overall Crown response to the 207 recommendations from the Royal Commission directed at the Crown which will be available on the Crown Response Office website.

Conclusion

- 13 The Government acknowledges survivors of abuse and neglect in care, and their supporters. It thanks them for their courage in speaking out and enabling

their abuse and neglect to be unearthed by the Royal Commission,
documented and acknowledged.

Proactive release - open and transparent government



Cabinet Legislation Committee

Minute of Decision

This document contains information for the New Zealand Cabinet. It must be treated in confidence and handled in accordance with any security classification, or other endorsement. The information can only be released, including under the Official Information Act 1982, by persons with the appropriate authority.

Government Response to the Petition of Scott Savage

Portfolio **Government's Response to the Royal Commission's Report into Historical Abuse in State Care and in the Care of Faith-based Institutions**

On 26 June 2025, the Cabinet Legislation Committee:

- 1 **approved** the Government response to the *Petition of Scott Savage: Abuse in Care survivor pay-outs to be \$3,500,000*, attached under LEG-25-SUB-0117;
- 2 **invited** the Lead Coordination Minister for the Government's Response to the Royal Commission's Report into Historical Abuse in State Care and in the Care of Faith-based Institutions to present the Government response to the House in accordance with Standing Order 380;
- 3 **noted** that a copy of the response will be forwarded to the petitioner on presentation by the Clerk of the Petitions Committee.

Tom Kelly
Committee Secretary

Present:

Hon David Seymour
Hon Chris Bishop (Chair)
Hon Simeon Brown
Hon Paul Goldsmith
Hon Louise Upson
Hon Dr Shane Reti
Hon Todd McClay
Hon Shane Jones
Hon Brooke van Velden
Hon Tama Potaka
Hon Simon Watts
Hon Casey Costello
Hon Nicole McKee
Hon Chris Penk
Hon Andrew Hoggard
Jamie Arbuckle, MP
Todd Stephenson, MP

Officials present from:

Officials Committee for LEG



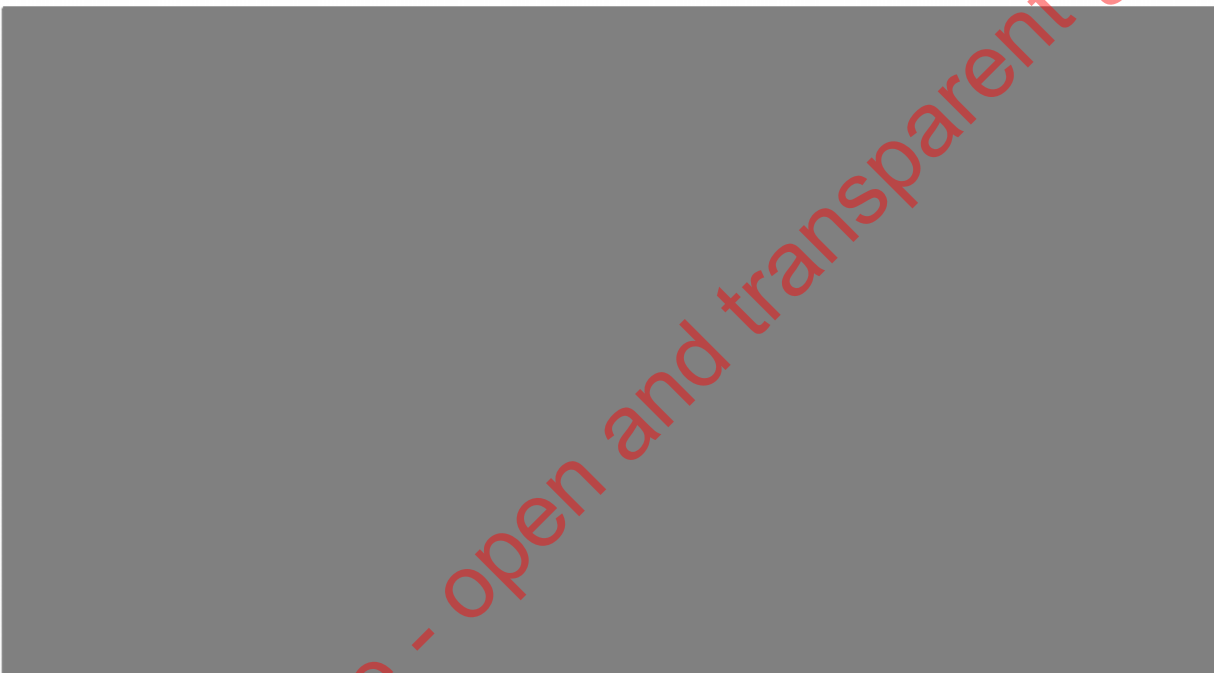
Cabinet

Minute of Decision

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Report of the Cabinet Legislation Committee: Period Ended 27 June 2025

On 30 June 2025, Cabinet made the following decisions on the work of the Cabinet Legislation Committee for the period ended 27 June 2025:



LEG-25-MIN-0117

Government Response to the Petition of Scott Savage

CONFIRMED

Portfolio: Government's Response to the
Royal Commission's Report into
Historical Abuse in State Care and in the
Care of Faith-based Institutions





Proactive release - open and transparent government



Proactive release - open and transparent government

Rachel Hayward
Secretary of the Cabinet

Proactive release - open and transparent government