

# Open letter:

## Enable disabled people, family and whānau to thrive

**Reissued: 25 June 2024**

**First issued: 14 May 2024**

**To: The Honourable Louise Upston, Minister for Disability Issues  
and of Social Development**

**The Honourable Nicola Willis, Minister of Finance**

Tēnā kōrua Minister Upston rāua ko Minister Willis,

We write as organisations representing disabled people, their families and whānau, disability support services, and the wider disability community.

We know that disabled people and those who love, support and care for us could be thriving right now. We could contribute to our communities in ways that work for us without fear of losing the income we need to support us.

But persistent underinvestment from successive Governments for disabled people and our wellbeing means many of us are spending precious energy just trying to keep our heads above water.

When others decide who is worthy of support and on what conditions, they often fail to recognise the extent to which health conditions, disabilities, cost of living pressures and employment-related barriers impact on our community.

When Government fails to resource our disability ministry enough to flexibly support our disabled community and whānau, we are funnelled towards poverty, stress, and isolation.

It doesn't have to be this way.

We urge Government to:

- Fully reverse the restrictions within the Disability Support Services Purchasing Guidance and to Equipment and Modification Services made on 18 March 2024.
- Recognise disability support and services as frontline work and fund accordingly.
- Ensure an equitable, culturally responsive approach to resourcing support and services to disabled people across the whole of Government.
- Recognise that people with disabilities and health conditions are the experts on the barriers we face by increasing income and employment support and removing sanctions that cause harm to disabled people.
- Support meaningful involvement of disabled people, whānau and the wider disability sector in all Disability Support System reviews and high-level decisions.

There is a pressing need for Government to demonstrate that it values disabled people as key members of our community by ensuring that disabled people and their families and whānau have the resources they need to thrive.

With hope,

- Disabled Persons Assembly NZ Inc.
- 350 Aotearoa
- Access Community Health
- Access Matters Aotearoa
- ActionStation Aotearoa
- Adult Guardianship Services Trust
- Aotearoa New Zealand Adult Safe-guarding Alliance
- AraHina Consultancy
- Association of Blind Citizens of New Zealand (Blind Citizens NZ)
- Auckland Action Against Poverty
- Auckland Women's Centre
- Autism Support Network New Zealand
- Beneficiaries and Unwaged Workers Trust
- Carers NZ
- CCS Disability Action
- Child Poverty Action Group
- College of Child & Youth Nurses | Tapuhita Ngā Mokopuna Mō Apōpō
- Complex Care Group
- Contenance NZ
- Deaf Aotearoa
- Deafblind Association of New Zealand Charitable Trust
- Disability Connect
- Disability Leadership Canterbury
- Disability Responsiveness New Zealand Ltd
- Disabled People Against Cuts Aotearoa
- Disabled United (DUNZ)
- Donald Beasley Institute
- Enabling Good Lives Taranaki
- Fairer Future Coalition
- FinCap
- Foundation for Equity and Research New Zealand
- Fragile X New Zealand
- Good Lives Wairarapa
- Hearing NZ
- iFunz
- Inclusive Education Action Group Incorporated
- Kanohi ki te Kanohi
- Methodist Alliance
- Migrants Against the Acceptable Standard of Health Aotearoa
- My Life My Voice
- National Disabled Students' Association
- New Zealand Association of Gerontology NZAG
- New Zealand Council of Christian Social Services
- New Zealand Disability Support Network
- New Zealand Down Syndrome Association
- New Zealand Riding for the Disabled
- NorthAble Matapuna Hauora
- Northern Monthly Meeting, Te Hāhi Tūhauwiri, Religious Society of Friends ANZ
- NZ Carers Alliance
- NZ Disability Advisory Trust Inc
- NZ Foundation for Conductive Education

- Older Disabled Persons Group
- Parent Help
- Parents of Vision Impaired NZ
- People First NZ
- Poverty Free Aotearoa
- Project Gender
- PSA Deaf and Disabled Network Committee
- Public Housing Futures
- Public Service Association
- Rare Disorders New Zealand
- Social Equity & Wellbeing Network (SEWN)
- System Change Aotearoa
- Te Ao Marama Aotearoa Trust
- Te Taitokerau Tangata Whai Ora Network Trust
- The Swan Nest
- Tiaho Trust
- Together Diverse
- United Community Action Network (UCAN)
- VIPS – Equity in Education
- VisAble
- Young Carers NZ



Disabled Persons Assembly NZ



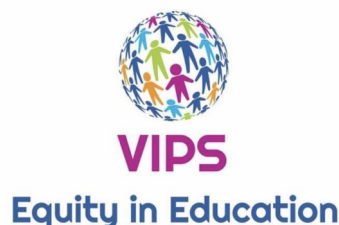
TE HUNGA HAUĀ MAURI MŌ NGĀ TĀNGATA KATOĀ



Blind Citizens NZ



Whakakaha te Oranga Taranaki





Deafblind Association  
New Zealand  
Taringa Turi Kāpō Rōpū



AraHina  
FACILITATION & COACHING CONSULTANCY



PROJECT+**GENDER**



TTWON:  
Te Taitokerau  
Tangata Whai Ora Network



Auckland  
Women's  
Centre



New Zealand Council Of  
Christian Social Services



CHiLD  
POVERTY  
ACTION  
GROUP

#ENDASHNOW!



