Parliamentary Submission for Healthy Futures (Pae Ora) Amendment Bill

Submission to the Health Select Committee

To: Health Select Committee
From: Ivor Jones, Chairperson, Te Tahuna Trust
On behalf of: Ngāti Tamateatutahi-Ngāti Kawiti Hapū
Date: 14 August 2025
Subject: Submission on the Healthy Futures (Pae Ora) Amendment Bill

Ko wai mātou - Who we are

Ngāti Tamateatutahi-Ngāti Kawiti is a hapū of Ngāti Pikiao, part of the Te Arawa confederation of iwi in Te Moana-a-Toi (Bay of Plenty). Our rohe encompasses areas around and within Te Roto-whaiti-i-kite-ai-a-Ihenga-i-ariki-ai-a-Kahumatamomoe (Lake Rotoiti), Te Rotoehu, and Te Rotomā. As tangata whenua, we have maintained unbroken connections to our whenua and moana for many generations.

Te Tahuna Trust manages approximately 49 hectares of multiply-owned Māori land at Hinehopu on the eastern shores of Lake Rotoiti, including 28 leasehold properties and environmental restoration projects. We are governed by our **Te Taiao o Te Whatuoranganuku Environmental Management Plan 2015**, which articulates our kaitiakitanga responsibilities and commitment to sustainable development for present and future generations.[1]

Position on the Bill

We respectfully OPPOSE the Healthy Futures (Pae Ora) Amendment Bill in its current form, as it fails to adequately recognise Te Tiriti o Waitangi principles and undermines Māori health equity aspirations established under the original Pae Ora (Healthy Futures) Act 2022.

Key Concerns and Recommendations

1. Breach of Te Tiriti o Waitangi Obligations

The Bill continues a concerning pattern of unilateral Crown decision-making without meaningful consultation with tangata whenua. Following the disestablishment of Te Aka Whai Ora (Māori Health Authority), this Bill further erodes the **tino rangatiratanga** guaranteed under Article II of Te Tiriti.[2]

Recommendation: The Bill must include robust provisions ensuring Māori participation in health governance, including restored functions equivalent to those previously held by Te Aka Whai Ora.

2. Undermining of Iwi-Māori Partnership Boards (IMPBs)

The proposed amendments threaten to diminish the statutory functions of IMPBs, which are crucial mechanisms for ensuring local Māori voices influence health service delivery within our rohe. Our hapū has established strong relationships with our local IMPB representatives who understand the specific health challenges facing our whānau.[2]

Recommendation: Retain and strengthen IMPB statutory functions, ensuring they have adequate resources and authority to commission services that address Māori health disparities.

3. Incompatibility with Environmental Health and Wellbeing

Our **Te Taiao o Te Whatuoranganuku Environmental Management Plan** recognises the inseparable connection between environmental health and human health. The mauri of our lakes, rivers, and whenua directly impacts the hauora of our people. The Bill lacks provisions connecting environmental stewardship with health outcomes.[1]

Recommendation: Include explicit recognition that environmental health is fundamental to Māori wellbeing, and ensure health planning incorporates kaitiakitanga principles and environmental determinants of health.

4. Failure to Address Rural and Remote Health Challenges

Our hapū community faces unique health challenges as a rural Māori community. Geographic isolation, limited transport options, and distance from specialist services create barriers to accessing healthcare. The Bill does not adequately address these rural health inequities.[3]

Recommendation: Include specific provisions for rural Māori health service delivery, including telehealth capabilities, mobile clinics, and culturally appropriate community-based care models.

5. Incorporation of AI Framework Principles

As required by the **Public Service AI Framework**, any health technology deployments must align with tikanga Māori and include meaningful Māori participation in AI governance. The Bill should explicitly require AI systems used in health services to be transparent, culturally appropriate, and subject to ongoing Māori oversight.[4][5]

Recommendation: Include provisions requiring all AI and digital health technologies to undergo cultural impact assessments and obtain hapū/iwi approval before deployment in Māori communities.

Specific Clause Amendments Requested

Clause [X] - Health System Principles: Insert explicit reference to Te Tiriti o Waitangi as the foundation document governing Crown-Māori relationships in health.

Clause [Y] - IMPB Functions: Retain existing statutory functions and add provisions for local commissioning authority with adequate funding allocation.

Clause [Z] - Environmental Health: Include recognition that environmental degradation directly impacts Māori health outcomes and require environmental health assessments in all health planning.

Conclusion

The original Pae Ora Act represented significant progress toward health equity for Māori. This Amendment Bill, however, undermines that progress and fails to honour Te Tiriti obligations. We urge the Committee to substantially amend this Bill to restore Māori health governance, strengthen IMPB functions, and recognise the interconnection between environmental and human health.

As kaitiaki of Te Roto-whaiti-i-kite-ai-a-Ihenga and surrounding rohe, we remain committed to working in partnership with the Crown to achieve pae ora - healthy futures for all our people. However, this must be achieved through genuine partnership, not through unilateral legislative changes that diminish Māori authority in health.

Request for Oral Submission: We request the opportunity to present our submission orally to the Committee to provide further detail on our concerns and recommendations.

Contact Information:

Ivor Jones
Chairperson, Te Tahuna Trust
Email: ivor.jones@tetahuna.maori.nz
Phone: 027 201 3347

Ngā mihi nui

Ivor Jones
Chairperson, Te Tahuna Trust
On behalf of Ngāti Tamateatutahi-Ngāti Kawiti Hapū

1. Tamateatutahi-Kawiti-Hapu-EMP-2015.pdf
2. https://tepaeoranga.org.nz/2025/08/13/submission-on-the-healthy-futures-pae-ora-amendment-bill/
3. https://www.health.govt.nz/about-us/new-zealands-health-system/overview-and-statutory-framework/pae-ora-healthy-futures-act
4. https://www.dia.govt.nz/press.nsf/d77da9b523f12931cc256ac5000d19b6/dd22bbdc433e7471cc258c210072b2d1!OpenDocument
5. https://www.digital.govt.nz/standards-and-guidance/technology-and-architecture/artificial-intelligence/public-service-artificial-intelligence-framework