

6 Hōngongoi (July) 2026

Finance and Expenditure Committee
Parliament Buildings
WELLINGTON 6160



Tēnā koe

Submission on the Te Here ā Nuku (Nelson Tenth's) Bill

This Submission

1. This submission is made on behalf of the Rangitāne o Wairau Group (comprising Te Rūnanga a Rangitāne o Wairau Trust, Rangitāne o Wairau Settlement Trust, Rangitāne Holdings Limited and Rangitāne Investments Limited) on the Te Here ā Nuku (Nelson Tenth's) Bill.
2. Rangitāne supports the Bill and wishes to be heard before the Finance and Expenditure Committee.

About Rangitāne

3. Rangitāne have resided in Te Taihū o Te Waka-a-Māui for many generations, with customary interests extending across Te Wairau, Whakatū, Te Tai-o-Aorere, Mohua and the wider northern South Island. These interests have been recognised through the Te Taihū Waitangi Tribunal inquiry process and through the settlement of Rangitāne historical claims with the Crown.
4. The Crown acknowledged through the Rangitāne settlement process that it repeatedly failed to properly identify, investigate and recognise the nature and extent of Rangitāne customary interests in Te Taihū. The Crown further acknowledged that its actions contributed to Rangitāne becoming effectively landless and had a significant impact on the economic, social and cultural wellbeing of the iwi.
5. Rangitāne is also one of the Kurahaupō iwi of Te Taihū. The history of the Nelson Tenth's, and the Crown's administration of those arrangements, forms part of the wider historical experience of Kurahaupō iwi within the region.

Rangitāne Position

6. Rangitāne supports the Te Here ā Nuku (Nelson Tenth's) Bill.
7. The Bill gives effect to the Resolution Agreement reached between the Crown and Te Here ā Nuku Trust and provides the statutory mechanism necessary to transfer legal title to lands that the courts have found were held by the Crown on trust for the descendants of the customary owners. It also provides the framework necessary to implement the practical arrangements associated with that transfer.
8. Rangitāne considers the Bill should proceed.

Context

9. The Nelson Tenth's arrangements form part of the wider history of Crown conduct in Te Taihū.

10. The Crown acknowledged through the Rangitāne settlement process that the New Zealand Company purported to purchase lands throughout the northern South Island and that the Crown subsequently failed to properly investigate Rangitāne rights and interests before granting land to the Company. The Crown also acknowledged that Rangitāne did not receive payment for their interests or a share in the Nelson Tenth's reserves established from those lands.
11. These matters are not separate from the history that underpins the Nelson Tenth's litigation.
12. Rangitāne tūpuna, alongside other Kurahaupō iwi, sought recognition of their interests in the Nelson Tenth's reserves and associated lands through Native Land Court investigations during the nineteenth century. Those claims were unsuccessful. Rangitāne records note that the Native Land Court treated Rangitāne as a defeated iwi without continuing rights or interests in Te Taihū.
13. The Waitangi Tribunal subsequently examined these matters through the Te Tau Ihu inquiry. The Tribunal found that Rangitāne should have been beneficiaries of the Nelson Tenth's reserves. Despite that finding, those interests were never recognised through the administration of the Tenth's arrangements.
14. Accordingly, while the Te Here ā Nuku litigation proceeded separately from Treaty settlement processes, it addresses issues that sit within a broader history that directly affected Rangitāne and other Kurahaupō iwi.

Relevance to Rangitāne

15. Rangitāne's interest in the Bill extends beyond support for the Resolution Agreement reached between the Crown and Te Here ā Nuku Trust.
16. The Crown has already acknowledged that Rangitāne did not receive payment for our interests or a share of the Nelson Tenth's reserves. The Waitangi Tribunal subsequently found that Rangitāne should have been beneficiaries of those reserves. These matters are recorded in both Crown settlement documents and Rangitāne records.
17. For that reason, Rangitāne views the Nelson Tenth's issue as part of a wider history of Crown actions in Te Taihū that affected the recognition of customary interests, access to land, and participation in the economic opportunities associated with settlement and development of the region.
18. The Stafford litigation and subsequent Resolution Agreement have also been relevant to Rangitāne because descendants of Rangitāne are among the customary owners recognised within the Spain Award area. The implications of the litigation have therefore extended beyond the immediate parties to the proceedings and into broader customary and settlement arrangements within Te Taihū.

Delivery of Treaty Settlement Redress

19. The Bill is also significant because it enables the completion of Treaty settlement redress that has been affected by the unresolved status of lands within the Spain Award area.
20. Certain land at Auckland Point School provides a practical example.
21. Auckland Point School formed part of the Rangitāne o Wairau Treaty settlement as Deferred Selection Property redress. Rangitāne exercised its selection right and completed settlement of the property on 20 March 2015. Since that date, Rangitāne has been the beneficial owner of the property and has received the associated rental income.
22. However, legal title could not transfer because the property was subject to a longstanding Wakatū caveat associated with the Nelson Tenth's litigation and lands within the Spain Award area. As a result, a component of Treaty settlement redress remained unable to be fully implemented despite settlement occurring more than a decade ago.

23. Following the Resolution Agreement reached in December 2025, the Crown confirmed that Rangitāne's Auckland Point School redress could proceed as originally intended. The lifting of the Wakatū caveat and resolution of the litigation has enabled the transfer process to move forward and removed uncertainty that had existed since settlement.
24. While Auckland Point School is only one example, it illustrates that the practical consequences of the Nelson Tenth's litigation extended beyond the transfer of land and assets to customary owners. The litigation also affected the Crown's ability to complete aspects of existing Treaty settlement redress. Resolution of those issues benefits not only Te Here ā Nuku Trust and Ngā Uri, but also provides certainty for iwi, settlement entities and the Crown.

Relevance Beyond Te Here ā Nuku Trust

25. Rangitāne considers that the significance of the Bill extends beyond the immediate transfer of land and assets to Te Here ā Nuku Trust.
26. The Bill implements the Resolution Agreement reached following decades of litigation and gives effect to findings that the Crown held affected lands on trust for the descendants of the customary owners. It also provides certainty regarding the future administration of those lands and associated assets.
27. The Bill further provides certainty in relation to wider property, governance and settlement arrangements within Te Taihū. As demonstrated by Auckland Point School, issues arising from the Stafford litigation had implications for properties and interests beyond those directly transferred to Te Here ā Nuku Trust. The Bill therefore assists in resolving longstanding uncertainty across a range of legal and practical arrangements within the region.

Support for the Bill

28. Rangitāne supports the Bill in its entirety.
29. In particular, Rangitāne supports:
 - the implementation of the Resolution Agreement reached between the Crown and Te Here ā Nuku Trust;
 - the transfer of legal title to lands found by the courts to be held on trust for the descendants of the customary owners;
 - the statutory arrangements necessary to support the future administration of those lands and assets; and
 - the certainty the Bill provides in relation to existing Crown commitments and arrangements affected by the litigation.
30. Rangitāne also supports the Bill because it enables the Crown to complete existing commitments, including aspects of Treaty settlement redress that have remained unresolved as a consequence of the litigation.

Acknowledgements

31. Rangitāne wishes to acknowledge those who have contributed to achieving resolution of this long-standing matter.
32. In particular, we acknowledge Rore Stafford, his whānau, and all those who have stood alongside him over many years in pursuing recognition of the Crown's obligations arising from the Nelson Tenth's arrangements. Their commitment, perseverance and willingness to pursue the matter through the courts over many decades has ultimately led to the resolution reflected in this Bill.
33. We also acknowledge former Attorney-General Judith Collins, Ministers, Crown officials and the Government for their willingness to engage in good-faith negotiations and reach a durable

resolution following the court proceedings. While the issues involved have been complex and often difficult, the Resolution Agreement reflects a commitment to resolving longstanding grievances and providing certainty for future generations.

34. Rangitāne further acknowledges the contribution of the Te Here ā Nuku Working Group, Trustees, advisers and supporters who have helped guide the resolution process and prepare for the future governance and administration of the assets that will be transferred under this legislation.
35. We wish to particularly acknowledge Nicole Akuhata and Dr Peter Meihana, who have represented Kurahaupō interests throughout recent phases of the resolution process. Both have committed considerable time, expertise and leadership to advancing understanding of the history of the Nelson Tenth, supporting engagement between whānau and iwi, and contributing to the achievement of a resolution that will provide enduring benefits for future generations.
36. The significance of this Bill extends well beyond the transfer of land and assets. It represents the culmination of generations of advocacy and the efforts of many people who have worked to ensure that the commitments made to customary owners were finally recognised. The outcomes arising from this legislation will be felt not only by those involved today, but by future generations who will inherit the benefits of the resolution achieved through their efforts.

Concluding Remarks

37. Rangitāne supports the Te Here ā Nuku (Nelson Tenth) Bill.
38. The Bill gives effect to the Resolution Agreement reached between the Crown and Te Here ā Nuku Trust, implements findings arising from the courts, and provides certainty regarding lands held within the Spain Award area. It also assists in resolving matters that have affected wider Crown obligations and settlement arrangements within Te Taihū.
39. For Rangitāne, the Bill is relevant because our tūpuna were excluded from the Nelson Tenth reserves, because the Crown acknowledged that Rangitāne did not receive a share of those reserves, because the Waitangi Tribunal found that Rangitāne should have been beneficiaries of the Tenth, and because resolution of the litigation has enabled the completion of Treaty settlement redress that has remained unresolved since 2015.
40. Rangitāne therefore supports the Bill and respectfully requests the opportunity to appear before the Committee in support of this submission.

Request to be Heard

41. Rangitāne wishes to be heard in support of this submission.

Nāku iti noa, nā



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