

Submission
No 29

**INQUIRY INTO CRIMES (APPEAL AND REVIEW)
AMENDMENT (DOUBLE JEOPARDY) BILL 2019**

Name: Ms Penny Stadhams

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Partially
Confidential

Submission to the Parliamentary Inquiry

My name is Penny Stadhams and I live at _____ Bowraville. I am the aunt of Evelyn Greenup. My sister is Rebecca Stadhams, Evelyn's mother.

The deaths of our children and process of trying to find justice has devastated our family. People in our family and community have been withdrawing from work, and community life, and the trauma of the loss of our children is still very raw. It's been nearly 30 years, but the trauma will never go away. No trauma ever really goes away, its how you deal with the trauma.

We feel as though the legal system has failed us. We did not understand that one word could have such an effect on a case, and be the reason the man that killed our kids is still free. He is living his life to the fullest, while our family is still suffering. If this happened to a white family, someone would already be locked away for these crimes, yet the man who did this to our family is able to change his name, start another family and move on with his life. Without this man being locked away, our family does not feel safe. We are always worried about what he might do, especially when there has been a trial or news about the murders in the papers.

We understand that the committee cannot guarantee us justice at this stage. It's been 29-30 years now, so the family knows there are certain steps and stages that they have to go through to get to where they need to be in the legal system. We know there are submissions, there are recommendations, there might be decisions and reviews by a legal team, and advice given by the Attorney-General, and the Attorney-General and so forth passing on that information. The family is aware of the processes as we have been through this process multiple times over the years. We're resilient and we've been patient. At times it can be challenging but we are aware that it is a process. If it's going to be these steps again, it could be another long journey for the family.

Justice for us is for the Parliament to do what it said it was going to do and fix the balance between victims and the people who commit these crimes. I understand these laws have been around for years. The Bowraville murder case is the first to go through this process and its all been for nothing as we did not get the results we wanted which was justice. The law was changed the families advocated extremely hard and still there was NO justice for our children. We are the first time they have ever been used and they did not work. That is not balance. Why did they even pass those laws if they don't work? Justice for us is that man coming back, Parliament passing it, and for him to be on trial for all three cases. Justice is for that person of interest to be brought to court for the murders of all three children. Colleen's, Evelyn's, and Clinton's. That's all we've wanted and it's never happened. He's a serial killer, and these were just three Aboriginal kids from the small town of Bowraville. I don't think the law has found the right balance. I don't understand much about the law, but if we had balance, that man wouldn't still be out there walking. He's living his life to the fullest while our families are suffering.

Our family still has hope, although we are deeply disappointed and hurt from the last decision made at the high courts. We've had our case before Parliament before and they rejected it. They need to make it right and fix it so that victims and the families of murdered people can get justice in NSW and have closure from loved ones murdered.

We don't want to see what's happened here to happen to any other family in New South Wales. We want the Parliament to walk in our shoes, imagine this was their kids, their sister's sons or daughters gone. And imagine you're still fighting for justice 30 years on. 30 years is a long time. Our families have been hoping that long, we've been praying that long. We feel that the legal system is letting us down. There's certain decisions they just need to pass, and open those doors for the families. Not only for the Bowraville families, but for every family in New South Wales. There's a lot of cases worse than ours, or up there with it, and the Parliament just need to open those doors so we can get justice. They should give us that right, if not just for us, then for everyone else in New South Wales who's been going through the same thing. These are children's lives, people's lives, and people's emotions and feelings.

Penny Stadhams
July 1 2019