



EXECUTIVE COUNCIL CHAMBERS

19 March 2025

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Ref: OIA-2024/25-0718

Tēnā koe [REDACTED]

Official Information Act request: Denial of royal assent to legislation by governor general

Thank you for your Official Information Act (the Act) request received on 19 February 2025. You requested:

I would like to request information from the governor general's office. I would like to know how many times the governor general has refused royal assent to legislation being passed by parliament, and if so what these cases were. And how many times has the governor general sought changes to legislation before giving royal assent and what cases were these? Let me know if that needs further refined or scoped but I'm anticipating it's not a high number? And would anticipate records are kept in relation to that - is that correct?

Response to your request

The Governor-General gives Royal assent to Bills passed by the House of Representatives and does so on the advice of the Prime Minister. No Governor-General has refused to give Royal assent in New Zealand. Therefore I refuse the first part of your request under section 18(e) of the Act on the basis the information does not exist.

We have no records of a Governor-General seeking changes to Bills before giving Royal assent. As such I also refuse this part of your request under section 18(e) of the Act.

I note that section 56 of the New Zealand Constitution Act 1852 (UK) gave the Governor-General power to delay assent and by message return a Bill to the House of Representatives with proposed amendments. We understand this statutory power was exercised on advice. That power was formally repealed in 1986 by section 26 of the New Zealand Constitution Act 1986.

You have the right to ask the Ombudsman to investigate and review my decision under section 28(3) of the Act.

This response will be published on the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet's website during our regular publication cycle. Typically, information is released monthly,

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or as otherwise determined. Your personal information including name and contact details will be removed for publication.

Nāku noa, nā



Rachel Hayward
Clerk of the Executive Council