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Remove time limits on child abuse claims nationally: ALA

03 July, 2015 **Felicity Nelson** 0 (/news/16768-remove-time-limits-on-child-abuse-claims-nationally-ala#disqus_thread)

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The Australian Lawyers Alliance has congratulated the Victorian parliament for extending the period in which victims of child abuse can pursue legal action.

The *Limitation of Actions Amendment (Child Abuse) Act 2015*, which came into effect on 1 July, removes time limits on actions relating to death or personal injury resulting from institutional child abuse.

ALA spokesperson Dr Andrew Morrison SC (pictured) said the historic legislation would give survivors of abuse greater access to justice.



“Such a move is in keeping with findings that </news/16768-remove-time-limits-on-child-abuse-claims-nationally-ala> survivors can take more than 20 years to disclose abuse,” Dr Morrison said.

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The ALA urged the New South Wales Government to take similar steps to remove limitations periods.

“This would incorporate adopting Option A in the ‘Limitation Periods in Civil Claims for Child Sexual Abuse’ discussion paper issued by the NSW government earlier this year,” Dr Morrison said.

He said leadership by NSW “could see other states and territories fall into line”.

“It is clear that institutional responses to child sexual abuse to date have been grossly inadequate.

“It is time for other states to introduce similar legislation to ensure that there is a consistent approach nationwide for survivors of abuse to be able to access justice.”

Dr Morrison said the Fairbridge Farm child abuse compensation claim, which reached a \$24 million settlement this week, was a “timely reminder that there are many victims of historical child abuse who still seek justice”.

The result represents the largest compensation settlement for institutional abuse in Australia’s history.

“The Fairbridge Farm settlement shows the amount of damages that are at stake for victims in their pursuit of justice,” Dr Morrison said.

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