

Reeves Assures Grooming Victims Their Concerns Are Being Taken Seriously

Chancellor Rachel Reeves has publicly addressed the concerns of grooming gang survivors, firmly stating that their voices are not being dismissed and that the government is committed to delivering justice and long-overdue reforms. Her comments come amid growing scrutiny of institutional failures exposed by recent reports and a national inquiry into child sexual exploitation across the UK.

Speaking during a press briefing, Reeves expressed empathy for the victims, many of whom have shared harrowing accounts of abuse and neglect by authorities. She emphasized that the government understands the anger and pain felt by survivors who were ignored or failed by the very systems meant to protect them. "Their experiences are real, their trauma is valid, and their voices will not be silenced," Reeves said.

Reeves' statement follows the publication of the Casey report, which outlined a "culture of denial" and systemic negligence in local councils and police forces that allowed grooming gangs to operate with impunity for years. The report also criticized the failure to record perpetrator ethnicity in most cases and pointed out how victims, often young teenage girls, were "adultified" and not taken seriously by professionals.

In response, the government has pledged to adopt all 12 recommendations from the report, including closing legal loopholes that allow adults to use consent as a defense in cases involving children under 16, enhancing child protection training, and improving inter-agency coordination.

Reeves reaffirmed the government's full support for Home Secretary Yvette Cooper's reforms to strengthen child safeguarding laws. She also stressed that the government's approach would remain victim-centered, ensuring survivors have access to justice, mental health support, and the opportunity to contribute to shaping future policy.

The Chancellor acknowledged that rebuilding trust would take time but said it was a top priority for the Labour government. She called on all political parties to unite behind efforts to confront the uncomfortable truths surrounding grooming gangs and institutional accountability.

Survivors' groups cautiously welcomed Reeves' remarks but emphasized that action, not just words, is needed to make real change. They urged the government to keep communication open with victims and prioritize meaningful reform.

As the inquiry continues and legislation is drafted, Reeves' statement signals a strong commitment from the top levels of government to ensure the mistakes of the past are not

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repeated and that grooming victims receive the justice and respect they deserve.