**Submission Template for Māori Communities Opposing the Fast Track Approvals Bill**

**[Insert Date]**

**Environment Select Committee**

**Subject: Submission Opposing the Fast Track Approvals Bill**

**From: [Insert Your Name/Organisation]**

**Tēnā koutou**,

My name is [Insert Your Name], and I represent [Insert Your Organisation or Community Name], a group committed to the protection and management of our taonga in [Insert Region/Area]. We write this submission to express our **strong opposition** to the proposed Fast Track Approvals Bill.

**Concerns Regarding the Fast Track Approvals Bill**

1. **Undermining of Te Tiriti o Waitangi Guarantees**
   * The Bill directly undermines the guarantees under Te Tiriti o Waitangi that affirm our tino rangatiratanga over our lands, villages, and taonga. By enabling decisions without meaningful consultation with Māori, the Bill disregards these foundational rights.
   * [Insert specific concerns or examples]
2. **Excessive Ministerial Powers**
   * We oppose the extensive powers proposed to be given to the Ministers, which could lead to decisions lacking thorough, evidence-based scrutiny and prioritizing political over environmental and cultural considerations.
   * [Insert details or specific instances where such powers could affect your community]
3. **Lack of Adequate Consultation**
   * The proposed fast-tracking of projects significantly limits our ability to engage meaningfully in the consent process, which is contrary to both Te Tiriti and our rights under the UNDRIP.
   * [Insert details about how the lack of consultation could impact specific projects in your area]
4. **Environmental and Cultural Impact Concerns**
   * The reduced timeframes for project approvals will likely lead to insufficient environmental and cultural impact assessments, putting our natural heritage and the health of our ecosystems at risk.
   * [Insert specific environmental or cultural concerns relevant to your community]

**Recommendations for Amendments to the Bill**

* **Independent Assessments:** We advocate for a requirement that all development proposals undergo robust, independent assessments by experts knowledgeable in environmental science and mātauranga Māori.
* **Recognition of Iwi and Hapū Rights and Interests:** The Bill should explicitly recognise and protect the rights and interests of Iwi and hapū, ensuring these are central to the Approvals process.
* **Extended Timeframes for Consultation:** We propose extending the timeframes to allow for thorough consultation processes, ensuring all affected parties have ample opportunity to contribute meaningfully.
* **Full Public Notification:** All projects should be publicly notified, with detailed information made available, allowing for community input and ensuring transparency.

**Conclusion**

As a community deeply connected to our land and as kaitiaki of our taonga, we must ensure that any development within our territories is conducted responsibly and respectfully, upholding Te Tiriti o Waitangi. We urge you to consider these points seriously and to revise the Fast Track Approvals Bill accordingly.

**Nāku noa, nā,**

[Insert Your Name]  
[Insert Position, if applicable]  
[Insert Contact Information]