

Peter Pav

28/8/2015

Senate Standing Committees on Community Affairs

I write to you in reference to Social Security Legislation Amendment
(Debit Card Trial) Bill 2015

As a person who has resided and had involvement in Ceduna for close To 50 years I feel I have the ability to comment and express my Objection to any form of Trialing of the Debit Card in this or any other area of Australia for that matter.

I completely agree with all of Senator Rachel Seiwert's objections to trialing the card in all facets.

Addressing issues like alcohol abuse and gambling require a range of measures and wrap around supports, just restricting spending and access to cash doesn't address the underlying causes and people will find other ways to buy alcohol as has been clearly seen in the Northern Territory.

"This measure outrageously suggests that all people on income support (aside from aged pensioners), including those on DSP are gambling and abusing alcohol and illicit drugs. This demonises people on income support and is a sledge hammer approach to social policy.

"We must abandon top down approaches that have failed in the past and will fail again and work closely with communities and leaders to address disadvantage." (quote Senator Siewert)

The card and what it represents is absolutely degrading and objectifies people who are struggling as it is. The consensus amongst the people I know in this town believes it is just wrong but feel helpless in stopping it.

The helplessness I speak of stems from the complete lack of information available to the general public from both Local council and Governmental agencies involved.

If the cards purpose is to help families then all I can say is yes you may help one or two but you will split a hundred. In all of your wisdom don't you understand that a lot of the youths are

quick in understanding and that they have already decided to leave town Just after Christmas, but well before the new card is destined to be trialed.

I believe the youths wishes to not be subjugated by the trial is in their planned exodus from Ceduna. This trial will force families apart creating further destruction to the normal family networks creating further anxiety and stress for all involved.

I also draw your attention to the added costs to the DSS. When this happens as invariably rent assistance is applied for as well as other funding to set up in a new area.

I further object to being part of a governmental economic experiment on the grounds of it being discriminatory.

Discrimination is treatment or consideration of, or making a distinction in favor of or against, a person or thing based on the group, class, or category to which that person or thing is perceived to belong to rather than on individual merit

This includes treatment of an individual or group based on their actual or perceived membership in a certain group or social category, "in a way that is worse than the way people are usually treated".

It involves the group's initial reaction or interaction going on to influence the individual's actual behavior towards the group leader or the group, restricting members of one group from opportunities or privileges that are available to another group, leading to the exclusion of the individual or entities based on logical or irrational decision making.

Neither Government nor Council should have the right to take away peoples self determination and dignity under the veil of a governmental trial to do so.

I do not believe this process has been transparent and that the whole issue was purposefully clouded with the basics card introduction and changes to the laws relating to it.

People became confused and had no idea that this new card had further and stronger incursions into the communities or they would have immediately objected and notified their representatives.

I firmly believe that all involved in the decision to trial this card are out of touch with the common man and are no longer true representatives of people's real wishes.

Sincerely yours

Peter Pav