

**From:** MALCOLM [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Sunday, 27 April 2005 2:45 PM  
**To:** Committee, FHS (REPS)  
**Subject:** Intercountry Adoption

The Committee Secretary  
Standing Committee on Family and Human Services  
House of Representatives  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Committee,

My husband Malcolm and I married later in life in 1999. I was 37 and he 39 years of age. We hoped we would be able to fall pregnant quickly, but like many people our age, pregnancies turned into miscarriages. We still wanted to have children, IVF was not an option due to my age and risk to my health for a pregnancy. We chose to investigate the possibility of Intercountry Adoption through the Department of Human Services, Melbourne, Victoria.

We attended an information session on Intercountry Adoption in May 2002 and our file for adoption for a child from the Philippines was sent November 2003. We were extremely fortunate to be allocated a beautiful boy Tim, 12 months old in May 2004.

We were both fortunate to have employment to be able to pay the fees associated with the application process of Intercountry Adoption. Fees for our application and assessment to Human Services were \$5950 plus \$1245 DIMA fees for the child's visa. Total \$7195, then there are the travel expenses to meet the child and payment to the child's country of origin, for care. As our adoptive child was over 6 months of age we were not eligible for the maternity payment of \$3000. We have been tax payers in Australia for a combined 47 years. We feel that it is unfair that we are unable to access the maternity payment that we would be eligible to receive if we had a biological child. We have assisted the Australian Government and community by bringing a potential tax payer into the country. I was fortunate that as a Registered Nurse I was able to receive the same leave as any other mother, which I am very appreciative.

We would like the Government to have no age restriction of the adoptive child to whether the adoptive family receive the Maternity payment. The application and assessment process for adoption should be one uniform system throughout Australia and more staff should be employed to assist with this process to reduce the waiting time for placement of a child. It would be of assistance if the fees involved could be tax deductible, as parents with biological children are subsidised through their obstetric experience with Medicare. My husband and I felt very supported by the staff of the Intercountry Adoption Service as we went through the process of adoption.

Looking forward to seeing the results of inquiry.

Yours sincerely  
Jan and Malcolm Carre-Riddell

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
Victoria [REDACTED]