

2019-2020

The Parliament of the
Commonwealth of Australia

THE SENATE

Coronavirus Economic Response Package Omnibus Bill 2020, and related bills

(Second reading amendment to be moved by Senator Siewert, on behalf of the Australian Greens)

At the end of the motion, add:

“, but the Senate is of the opinion that:

- (a) this package does not adequately support large sections of the population who will be left behind and disproportionately affected by this health crisis and the ensuing social lockdown and economic shutdown, and the Senate calls on the government to immediately amend its package to ensure proper support is provided to at least the following groups:
 - (i) the 37 per cent of the Australian workforce, casual and gig economy employees with no paid leave,
 - (ii) students, carers, Disability Support Pension recipients, and age pensioners who receive Commonwealth Rent Assistance, none of whom will be eligible for the \$550 a fortnight COVID-19 supplement and will be trapped beneath the poverty line and who face the very real threat of rental eviction,
 - (iii) First Nations peoples who are at severe risk of harm from COVID-19,
 - (iv) those facing domestic and family violence who are at serious risk during a period of prolonged isolation and who do not have adequately funded services to support them, and
 - (v) non-Australians who call Australia home, including asylum seekers on temporary protection visas, people who hold temporary work or skilled visas, international students, people who hold working holiday visas, New Zealand citizens on non-protected Special Category Visas, and new permanent residents, who do not all have access to income support and in many cases cannot return home;
- (b) it is critical to protect people from homelessness by placing a moratorium on evictions and the Senate calls on the Government to urgently make this happen;

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- (c) to enable people to work from home and to maintain social connection the Government must ensure that no one is cut off from internet services including the NBN;
 - (d) the government must provide much needed extra financial support to those industries hardest hit, including tourism, hospitality, and the arts and entertainment sector;
 - (e) to provide for workers who have no paid leave at all, the Government must pass the Greens' Fair Work Amendment (COVID-19) Bill 2020;
 - (f) the Government must ensure that it reverses funding cuts and lifts the freeze on indexation imposed on the Australian Broadcasting Corporation so that it can deliver timely, accurate and reliable advice to the public during this period;
 - (g) the Government must immediately suspend mutual obligation requirements to protect the health and safety of all people on income support payments and employment service providers;
 - (h) the Government must permanently increase the Jobseeker Payment, Youth Allowance, AUSTUDY and ABSTUDY after the crisis is over to ensure people on income support payments are not dropped below the poverty line;
 - (i) the Government must immediately cancel all robodebts and look to repay debts to robodebt victims once the crisis is over; and
 - (j) the Government must consider what other forms of support should be provided to promote social cohesion and reduce the potential for discrimination against already vulnerable individuals and communities in these challenging times.