

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Budget Estimates 2012-2013, 30 & 31 May and 1 June 2012

Question: E12-289

OUTCOME 2: Access to Pharmaceutical Services

Topic: Trans-Pacific Partnership

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Number of pages: 1

Senator: Senator Di Natale

Question:

Has the Department performed any modelling or estimates of the costs to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme of US proposals in the current round of the Trans-Pacific Partnership negotiations?

Answer:

The Gillard Government trade policy clearly states that it will not accept any provisions in the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) which would adversely affect Australian healthcare policy or constrain the Government's ability to regulate legitimately on important public policy matters, including in relation to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) or to our health system more generally.

The TPP negotiations, as with all Free Trade Agreement negotiations, are led by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), with input from other Government portfolios as required. The Department of Health and Ageing has provided input into the negotiations, making clear that agreement to any provisions that seek to delay generic entry to the Australian pharmaceutical market will impact Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) expenditure for both Government and patients.

No modeling or estimation of costs of the US proposals has been undertaken.