

From:
To: [Community Affairs Committee \(SEN\)](#)
Subject: DSP Income Portability
Date: Friday, 11 July 2014 1:54:06 PM

Senate Committee,

I will open by reminding the committee that there was a time when Social Security legislation was considered "beneficial" and that only changes which sought to benefit pensioners would be considered.

I am a DSP recipient and have been following becoming inflicted with schizophrenia at or around the middle of 1997.

During that time suffice to say that I have been subjected to more medical reviews than I care to remember, including when I was residing in Bali with my wife and step daughter when the department almost forced us apart.

It would be true to say that I am thoroughly contemptuous of the crown and it's ministers, amplified considerably by their current and ongoing activities of detaining children without charge or trial, indefinitely, in circumstances known to produce adverse medical outcomes, but alas, I digress. On this basis I refuse to vote, stating unequivocally to the electoral departments that I abstain on religious grounds of the moral variety.

I am currently a student at Charles Darwin Uni where I have have just successfully concluded 2nd year in a Diploma of Languages specialising in Indonesian.

My wife is in the final stages of concluding a Cert IV in Education Assistance specialising in Special Needs children.

The academic calendar is such that my wife gets more than 12 weeks holiday a year wherein we usually return to Indonesia to be with family and friends. If these new changes go ahead, am I to be financially forced to stay in Australia other then for four weeks a year whilst my loved ones fulfil their family obligations in Indonesia?

I would like to express the view that to carry a significant disability, and in my case that brings with it the primary responsibility of managing my condition such that I am not a threat to others or myself, far outweighs a life time of work and accordingly our portability should be the same as age pensioners.

I have a friend here in Bali who is also a DSP recipient and I have assisted him in a variety of ways to be comfortable, safe and legal here who is in a long term relationship with a local girl. These proposed changes will destroy him and relegate him to a lonely and destitute life in Australia, where his best option would be to by a camper van and move from camp site to camp site. According to him he never wanted to do other than work, but after a horrific motor bike accident and then losing half of his hand whilst working for [REDACTED] (who didn't allegedly compensate him fully) every time he tried to get a job he was struck out of contention after truthfully responding "yes" to the prospective employers question asking him if he had ever been in receipt of worker's compo.

The overall package for us must be considered as in many ways we are surrounded by insurmountable obstacles in so many ways with no credible solutions to elevate us to a living wage where we can share the same dignity as all others in the community. This is especially true of those of us who only have our DSP and nought else but a few personal effects.

And when we seek refuge in places such as Indonesia to escape our wretched existence in godless Australia this is some how wrong, and we are demonised as bludgers and malingerers. Some of us console ourselves that at least we do not abuse children and note that these kinds of repugnant legislative changes ought come as no surprise given the nature of the individuals proposing them.

I would add at this point that the department of Human Services has for some time being trumpeting these new changes to the portability rules on their web site and their answering machine as if it is already fact and that from Jan 1 2015 these changes will be put in place. Does this not also indicate the guvment's contempt for parliamentary process as well? If the department was alerting us to the possibility of this then that would be

fine, but that is not what they have said, a matter of fact which you no doubt can confirm independently for your selves.

There is much more that could be said, and hopefully others will say it except to add that the proposed discontinuation of the P.E.S. education supplement, which is already inadequate in the light of recent price hikes, will make it that much more difficult for us to conclude our studies and there is already too few of us in education. Some of us are trying, but if on the one hand the cost of living is to sky rocket on the back of fuel rises, which is already ludicrously high, and on the other you are reducing our income, then something has to give. I suspect that more of us will turn to criminal activity in order to make ends meet.

As a husband, my DSP has already been cut because I am partnered by nearly \$200 a fortnight and yet the reality is that our pooled expenses only save me approximately \$67 a fortnight. Suffice to say that there is more than a bit of what the Indonesians call " cinta gelap" or love in the dark as a consequence of this and for the guvment to come out and state that they are pro families is little more than another official lie.

We are opposed to these changes.

Sincerely,