



Jeanette Radcliffe
Secretary
Standing Committee on Community Affairs (Legislation Committee)
PO Box 6100,
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Jeanette,

Thank you for your invitation to comment on the Bill for National Disability Insurance Scheme Savings Fund Special Account.

I provide a submission in my capacity as the founding member and Chief Executive Officer of the Australian Network on Disability (AND). AND is a not-for-profit organisation resourced by its members to advance the inclusion of people with disability in all aspects of business, as well as into well paid and sustainable jobs.

In my role I have seen first-hand the positive difference that equitable access to education and employment can make to a person with a disability, and the significant flow on effects to social and economic well-being. I would also add that while the rates of employment and participation of people with a disability remain significantly lower than the population as a whole, and barriers to education and other aspects of community life still persist, continued Government support is essential.

AND is very supportive of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and related programs as a new way to provide opportunities and support for education, employment and life goals for all people with a disability.

Our organisation is also broadly supportive of new funding strategies such as the proposed Bill for the National Disability Insurance Scheme Savings Fund Special Account, subject to clarification.

In reading the current Bill, I note it contains little detail around the operation of the main clauses, such as how decisions are made around the allocation of funds to the account. In the interest of equity and accountability, and so as not to further disadvantage vulnerable groups, we seek clarification on several clauses of the Bill, namely:

Clause 7: Credits to the special account from the social services portfolio:

What assurance is there that funding credits are sourced from a social services program surplus or underspends, rather than by cutting existing programs, which may negatively impact on vulnerable groups of people, and especially for people with a disability.

Clause 8- Decision making and Governance:

In the current draft of the Bill, The Minister for Social Services has sole discretion over funding decisions to credit the Special Account, and can delegate and direct officials in their portfolio to undertake specific actions. There are no legislated consultation provisions with groups that may be negatively affected by such decisions, and it is not clear whether decisions would be subject to review.



How will the views of affected stakeholders, including people with a disability, be taken into consideration.

Clause 9: Review of the Special account:

This is not due for review before 2027. To ascertain the effectiveness of the provision a review in 3 to 5 years may be preferable.

Please call me if you have any questions about our submission and I look forward to reading the report in November.

Yours Sincerely,

Ms Suzanne Colbert AM
Chief Executive Officer
Email: info@and.org.au

