

Noeline Barron

9th February 2014

Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committees on Community Affairs
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Sir /Madam

Re Committee Inquiry: Grandparents who take primary responsibility for raising their
Grandchildren

I am a Grandmother who has reared two grandchildren since 1993. They are both now adults and any benefits that may come from this inquiry will not affect me in any way, however I wish to support those present day grandparents who are facing the difficulties of this situation. I am a Life Member of Grandparents Rearing Grandchildren which is a very strong support group in Western Australia.

I follow the Terms of Reference

- a. Children's daily needs are great and financial assistance is desperately needed.
- b. Grandparent's accepting to take on their grandchildren are saving Governments and Community services a huge amount of responsibility and funds.
- c. Family conflict and substance abuse/mental illness take a huge toll on the health of grandparents in this role.
- d. My personal experience with gaining Legal Custody of my two grandchildren was an emotional nightmare and very costly due to no access to Legal aid.
- e. Financial aid is a priority – I do not know how this could be implemented but as DCP foster carer's are paid generously for caring for children I feel that Grandparents must be given the same consideration.
- f. I was fortunate not to have children with special needs and I really know nothing about the support availability for these people so I cannot make a reasonable comment.
- g. I occasionally had difficulty with Centrelink enquiries and payments and I have heard our newer support group members make similar comments so this area may still need some improvement for Grandparent carer's.

I trust that my input into this community crisis may benefit your Inquiry and should you need any further detailed information from me I would be happy to oblige.

Yours sincerely