



**The Hon Stuart Robert MP
Minister for the National Disability Insurance Scheme
Minister for Government Services**

13 August 2020

Senator Rachel Siewert
Chair
Community Affairs References Committee
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Chair

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stuart Robert', written over the text 'Dear Chair'.

Public Interest Immunity Claim – Income Compliance Programme

The Committee has requested a copy of the Executive Minute to the Minister for Social Services dated 12 February 2015 (the Minute) that was referred to in the Commonwealth Ombudsman's 2017 report into Centrelink's automated debt raising and recovery system.

Revealing this information would or could reasonably be expected to disclose the deliberations of the Cabinet. On that basis, I claim public interest immunity in relation to providing the Minute.

It is in the public interest for the deliberations of the Cabinet not to be made public. The deliberations of the Cabinet and its committees should be conducted in secrecy so that the freedom of those deliberations can be preserved. It is not in the public interest to disclose information about the Cabinet's deliberations as it may impact on the Government's ability to receive confidential information and make appropriate decisions impacting on the Australian community. This is a well-established basis for a public interest immunity claim.

Yours sincerely

Stuart Robert