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Patron Her Excellency Ms Quentin Bryce AC
Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia
ABN 44 950 767 752

24 January 2014

Senate Select Committee into the Abbott Government's Commission of Audit
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Senators,

Please find attached Early Childhood Australia's (ECA) submission to the National Commission of Audit.

ECA supports the Government's review into the early childhood education and care system led by the Productivity Commission, which will provide a significant opportunity to reform the child care funding system to meet both workforce participation and early childhood development objectives. Any savings measures implemented before the Productivity Commission has begun to undertake its review would make it difficult for the Commission to provide advice to Government on meaningful and much needed reform of the Early Childhood Education and Care system. It may also have unintended consequences for families, services and the economy.

The recommendations made with our submission include;

- The Commission of Audit should not recommend any changes to Government Child Care assistance or the Child Care Services Support Program (CCSSP) pending the outcomes of the full review being undertaken by the Productivity Commission. Changes to any of these will potentially have significant effects on supply, availability, affordability and flexibility of early childhood education and care.
- The National Commission of Audit should support continued investment in universal access to preschool through the National Partnership Agreement on Early Childhood Education. Increasing and maintaining access to preschool education is fundamental to improving educational outcomes in Australia.

The timeframe for submissions would have made it difficult for many individuals and organisations from the early childhood education and care sector to make a submission to the commission. ECA hopes that this will be negated should the Commission determine that any policy reforms affecting the delivery of early learning services are designated to the full review currently being conducted by the Productivity Commission.

Yours Sincerely,

Samantha Page
ECA CEO