

From:
To: [Community Affairs Committee \(SEN\)](#)
Subject:
Date: Wednesday, 25 June 2014 10:00:02 AM

Social Services and Other
Legislation Amendment (2014 Budget Measures No. 1) Bill 2014 and
Social Services and Other Legislation Amendment (2014 Budget Measures
No. 2) Bill 2014

this
legislation will destroy my and my families lives.

this is the submission:

Dear Sir/Madame,

My name is Im a 50yr old male with a debilitating mental illness and have been on DSP since a severe breakdown when I was running a beef cattle property around 2001. Nothing has changed and I feel im going around in circles, quickly spiraling downhill.

I wish to vent my anger and sadness at what the government are proposing regarding only being allowed to see my wife and children overseas for only 4 weeks in one year. This will have a bad effect on my 87yr old mother who stays with my family as well. Mum needs my help and misses me terribly, even now at 6 weeks its almost impossible. Some consideration should be given to those of us with families abroad, who are long term DSP or who wish to reside abroad, saving the govt money by not getting treated here or having access to the other benefits available here.

about 10 years ago I started travelling to the Philippines to meet my penpal (we wrote letters back then, no emails or txt messages). I could feel my illness escalating and was in fear of ending up dead or in jail for a long time if I got out of control again in Australia. I really needed a break and some direction.

After meeting my new friend I decided to keep coming back to the Philippines, yet adhering to the 3mth rule imposed by the government. After a while my mind settled with better diet, weather and being part of a family & community that cared for me and helped me through episodes due to my condition. the trips back to australia were not easy and were a drain on finances but I managed.

after some time (about 7yrs ago) i asked centrelink if I was to marry and have a child would it effect my DSP payments. I was told it wouldnt so my wife had my Son, and we got married. My adopted daughter was around 7 when my son was born and had been with us already for a year. It was the happiest time of my life.

I have never been married before amnd dont have any other children. My illness has always prevented me from being close to anyone and all my previous relationships ended in disaster. Even the work I tried to do over the years was sporadic and short lived. This was the one thing in life i swore to God and my family that I would make work. that it

would be the one thing I would not fail at.

One time in centrelink I was complaining about the proposed 6 week rule & said to the person it will be very hard trying to make ends meet when most of my money will go on airfares and supporting my wife and Son, and that it would leave us in dire financial strife. I was bluntly told "just leave them and move on, theres more fish in the ocean". I was also told it was the law and there was nothing i could do about it. I felt shattered.

before the 6 week rule came in i complained about how hard it was already to about 20 politicians, including robert oakshot and jenny macklin. the only 2 replies I got back were just links to the legislation and basically just told again there was nothing I could do about it.

My world is really a mess. Im trying to save my marriage and my family. When im in Australia I call my wife and shes crying worrying about the future, my son is crying wanting me there and they really dont understand why the australian government is treating us like that when they said it was ok to get married.

I know if i was allowed to stay in the Philippines I would not be costing the govt here money with ancillary benefits especially medical or public housing, and I would be able to happily be with my family. If I am forced to leave my family what will become of them? This is the one chance in life i have to achieve just one good thing and its the one achievement in life this government is trying to take away from me.

People have suggested bringing my family here but this isnt an option, as our 14yr old (unofficially) adopted daughter (who has been with us about 7yrs), would not be able to join us. I contacted the ICAB (inter country adoption board), and they said no chance, I'm on a DSP and it just couldnt be done. the cost of bringing my family here are also impossible that now with the 6wk rule we are doing it harder than ever. not only that but soon as my wife gets here she would be plonked on a carers pension, I would be on DSP, I would be using everything I could that I was eligible for and would get public housing. above all we would not be happy, and I would be costing the govt more. And my daughter would be left stranded behind with nowhere to live. I cannot do that to my family, and should not be expected to just leave them or leave a 14yr old child without a home.

I beg you to PLEASE consider that FAMILIES are being DESTROYED here. Lives are being put at risk by these proposals. The system needs to be changed to account for those of us with families abroad, so we dont lose them. so that those who have previously sought out a better quality of health should be allowed to do it abroad, at less expense to the government. Other people on DSP are in worse situations than me, so I know mine is not an isolated case.

PLEASE consider our plight. we didnt ask to be stuck with a disability, so please at least let us live a decent life with the ones we love. At less expense to the govt.
PLEASE dont destroy my family, i have no one else.

sincerely...