



June - 2010

To the Senate Committee

My name is \_\_\_\_\_, of \_\_\_\_\_

I was born on the 29<sup>th</sup> of April in 1963 with my twin sister \_\_\_\_\_

In or around 1975 my twin and I were placed into foster care to a Neil and Carol Sellars, in Moorabbin Victoria, we were with this couple until 1979, during our time with this couple we were sexually, physically and mentally abused, we were at their mercy and raped any time he felt the need to do so, he would enter our room late at night and he would either rape me or I would hear him raping my twin sister, they once held me down and let their dog lick my vagina, I don't know why they did this or any of the things that they did to us, but I know that I would often zone out into my own world, all that they did to us is documented on our statement that we made to the police in 1979, the court case that followed these statements was very traumatic and made harder, by the fact that the abusers were present in court and tried to discredit us on the false grounds that we were willing participants, we obtained a conviction and \_\_\_\_\_ was sent to jail for two years and eight months, but \_\_\_\_\_ was not held accountable for her part in this crime, they dragged the case on for two years, as they kept on applying to higher courts, this court case was hell for \_\_\_\_\_ and I and understandably we found it hard to assist the courts in obtaining justice.

After we arrived to reside with this couple, a meeting was set up with a foster care group and from that meeting it was arranged, that \_\_\_\_\_ and I reside with \_\_\_\_\_ and that they would pay this couple eighty dollars a fortnight to care for us, at this meeting \_\_\_\_\_ and I were given a phone number to contact this department in case we had any problems with our placement, no long after the



abuse. Started, I phoned the department to try and set up a meeting, I told the lady from the department that I needed to talk to her, but she rang my foster mother and she came home from work to console me and I never got the chance to talk to the department ever again, then I realized that we were on our own.

Our time with this couple damaged our self esteem, mental state and stunted our growth with common life skills, so when I left this foster home at 16 I found life hard, mainly because I was illiterate and had to work hard too bring my educational levels up to a higher standard and I can tell you that when you are in an abusive or neglectful situation, high educational levels can be hard to obtain, also I was a victim of abuse with all of the traits that, that entails, as an adult I have had to fight hard to be understood and except that the system has stereo typed and misunderstands me, I saw this when the legal system allowed my abuse, to be used as grounds to take all of my four children, when I have no police record and CSU have had no problem with my relationship with my children, so I see my childhood abuse as a black mark on my life and I feel that it governs the way that I am dealt with, I have also seen this happen too many other ex state wards, and I feel that we are no more than fodder for the system.

My twin, my partner and myself would love to apply to be considered for the redress scheme, but we have found trying to apply as confusing and I can see that many people might miss out due to this fact.

I have also found it ironic that a policeman that signs up to be in their line of work (can claim for compensation for trauma that they suffer within their appointed work, which leads me to wonder if their rate of compensation is different



From state to state, but in turn ex care leavers that were forced to endure trauma, neglect and abuse are forced to mostly endure a traumatizing and lengthy court case.

The Apology gave me pride that so many respected people within Australia, felt the need to say sorry to my twin, the group of people that we belong and myself, sorry for the way the Government and their System allowed us to be treated and in turn making our lives and adulthood very difficult, but they do say talk is cheap and that is said for a reason, so I would love to see them back up their words with much needed Compensation money.

The redress is important to my twin, other care leavers "that I know" and myself, because of the Shame that we have had to hold, from being abused, neglected and care leavers and I have seen to many of us stereo typed misunderstood, reabused by the system and to many of us find it easier to hide who and what we are (keeping in mind that we never begged for what we received), and I feel that the redress will show the rest of Australia, that being a state ward and being abused and neglected, does matter and is worthy of compensation and to me it will be great to see ex care leavers, being able to hold their heads high and be proud of who they are.

I also feel that this needs to be handled fairly and can't see how the different amounts of compensation that is to be paid varies from state to state, I find this ironic that you could be better off to of been neglected and abused in care within Tasmania as opposed to other states, I see this as crazy and unfair, but there are examples of how other countries have fairly dealt with applying their redress schemes and I can see how this might help us to set up our scheme of redress.

Anyone that was put into care, have been disadvantaged in some way or another and I see this redress scheme as a way forward and forward is better than backwards, to a situation that has hurt and damage so many -

In closing I thank you for the opportunity to put forth my views on this matter and I wish you all the best, with the difficult and important decisions that you search to obtain.

Your Sincerely