

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this proposed legislation.

In my view the legislation is punitive, vindictive, and unnecessary. It continues the war on the unemployed and welfare recipients more generally that was so enthusiastically prosecuted under Tony Abbott's government and continues under Malcolm Turnbull.

Andrew Wilkie's recent speech on this topic covered some of the issues, as did the 3 ALP members' second reading speeches.

What hasn't been mentioned is the lack of fitness of at least some and quite possibly many of the job network providers to make decisions around "breaching" the unemployed in the ways proposed, plunging them into extreme financial distress. The operations of Max Solutions for example were discredited by ABC's Four Corners in February this year, yet they were rewarded with a huge slice of the current contract. Their Darlinghurst office in Sydney was recently in the news because of a knife wielding intruder claiming he was going to kill someone. (Sydney Morning Herald 8th October). An eye witness reported that the staff shut themselves in a room leaving their customers outside with the intruder and that there was no one in charge. I was in a Max Solutions office in Brisbane yesterday and heard the receptionist advise a phone enquirer that they have no manager in the office.

I have recently been involved with a Brisbane provider whose policy is to have no manager on site in their offices. Their official printed material advises their Centrelink customers to ring a 1800 number if they need to speak to someone with any authority.

The practices of these providers needs to be investigated. The staff on site are very often very young, and apparently inexperienced. From my experience the "churn" rate in this industry is enormous. It is ludicrous to hand such people the power to plunge the most financially vulnerable people in our society into even more financial distress. It is a gross abuse of the government's responsibility to the community.

Please reject this inappropriate transfer of power to those who are unfit to exercise it.

Thank you for your consideration.