



Community Letter of Impact and Harm

The Australian Neurodivergent Parents Association

“Nothing About Us Without Us”



www.thisisanpa.org

To be tabled before the Joint Standing Committee on the NDIS

22 October 2025

Presented by Sarah Langston

Why We Are Writing

We are parents of NDIS participants, NDIS participants ourselves and advocates in the Neurodivergent community. We live inside the system, not outside of it.

We are writing to tell you that people are being harmed by the speed, number, and handling of NDIS changes. These changes are causing fear, mental health breakdown, exhaustion, illness and family dysfunction. They are impacting people's sleep, eating, capacity to parent, work and sustain relationships.

What we are seeing now is not ordinary distress. It is collective burnout across our community.

What Is Happening

So many NDIS rules and pricing updates have happened, so fast, that people can no longer keep up. Even small neutral changes now cause panic because every announcement feels like another cut or threat, regardless of what it is about.

People's nervous systems are overloaded. They live on alert.

Many are now too frightened to use their funding because they don't trust that they understand the rules. There is no help in the community to explain changes properly, especially for people with learning or processing differences such as dyslexia, ADHD or Autism.

Loss of Safety and Rights

The new laws have removed the Minister's power to quickly step in when a decision is clearly causing harm. There is no longer an emergency stop button. There is no way to quickly fix dangerous or life-threatening mistakes.

This is not safe. There is now no "brake" the Minister can use to keep someone alive by ensuring supports stay in place.

At the same time, participants have lost or are losing basic civil rights; including the right to appeal decisions, and the right to an independent review when something goes wrong.

Without these safeguards, people can lose vital supports, their health, their housing, even their lives, and have no way to stop it. The powerlessness and resignation to harm we are seeing induced in our peers is extremely worrying. People feel trapped and hopeless.

This breaches Australia's duties under the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which guarantees the right to fairness, remedy, and protection from harm.

A system with no safety valve is unsafe by design.

Who Is Being Heard

Government keeps saying it is "consulting", but the people being listened to are mostly large charities and service providers, not Disabled people or our representative groups.

These organisations are not run by us and often make money from the NDIS. They have access to Ministers and senior staff that community organisations like ours do not.

This means the reforms are being shaped by those with financial or institutional interests, not by the people whose lives are most affected. We and other Disabled People's Representative Organisations (DPROs) have taken part in every consultation in good faith, but our input has been ignored.

This breaks Australia's obligations under Article 4(3) and General Comment No. 7 of the UN Convention, which clearly say that Disabled people must lead decisions about our own lives.

The Economic Reality

The NDIS is not a drain on the economy. It is not an unsustainable cost, nor a burden. The government and opposition must stop saying this, because it is a lie.

Every dollar spent returns about \$2.25 in wider economic value through jobs, productivity and lower health and welfare costs (Per Capita 2021).

Cutting the NDIS hurts everyone:

- It slows national growth and reduces GDP.
- It increases costs in hospitals, housing and crisis services.
- It pushes families and carers to breaking point.

These cuts are unnecessary, uneconomic and deeply harmful — to our community, our families, and the nation.

What We Are Asking

We call on this inquiry to compel the government and NDIA to:

1. Stop all further NDIS cuts.
2. Pause the new laws and pricing changes.
3. Bring back a Ministerial “emergency stop” power so dangerous decisions can be fixed fast.
4. Guarantee the right of appeal and independent review.
5. Work directly with Disabled People’s Representative Organisations (DPROs) as required by the UN Convention.

Until these steps are taken, harm will keep growing and trust will keep breaking down.

In Closing

Our fundamental civil and human rights are being stripped away. The right to appeal, to safety, and to fair treatment, are being taken from us.

We have worked in good faith. We have shown evidence. We have warned of harm. But the government has not listened. Therefore, we have lost confidence in the Ministers

responsible for the NDIS and in the Albanese Cabinet's ability to manage our community's affairs safely and fairly.

This is not about politics. It is about human safety, lawful governance and dignity. We ask you to pause the cuts, restore safety measures, and rebuild trust, before more lives are damaged or lost.

Our community cannot survive another year like this.

What you are doing to us is wrong.

Regards,

Sarah Langston
on behalf of
The Australian Neurodivergent Parents Association.



Key References

Per Capita (2021) False Economy: The economic benefits of the NDIS and the consequences of government cost-cutting.

DARU summary:

<https://daru.org.au/resource/false-economy-the-economic-benefits-of-the-national-disability-insurance-scheme-and-the-consequences-of-government-cost-cutting>

MacroBusiness (2025) NDIS reform will disable economic growth. 27 August 2025.
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UN CRPD (2018) General Comment No. 7 on participation of persons with disabilities through their representative organisations. CRPD/C/GC/7