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## **Family Law Legislation Amendment (Family Violence) Bill 2011**

P.O. BOX 492  
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### **Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs**

Dear Senators

The Lone Fathers Association Inc and Parents Without Partners Australia Inc are the two largest and longest lone parent organisations in Australia, with a combined operating time of 82 years. Both organisations have a membership of both male and females. For instance, the Lone Fathers Association has a membership of 67% men and 33% women, and Parents Without Partners Australia's membership is 60% women and 40% men. Since the commencement of both these organisations some 2,000,000 people - men, women, and children- have been involved with our services.

Both organisations have grave fears of what the Family Violence Bill 2011 contains and false claims that it will make things much fairer and safer for parents and children in family disputes.

The LFAA and PWP along with other loosely affiliated organisations believe that the Bill has the potential to escalate the number of broken families in Australia and place a great burden on the taxpayer from persons demanding the lone parent pension and other Centrelink payments which will drain the public purse.

The Bill and its widening of the definition of family violence will give both mums and dads a very easy escape route to opt out of marriage or a relationship. One parent will only have to disagree with the other over children's issues, or finances, etc. and one will then be able to use that as "controlling behaviour" or "emotional abuse" to report it as family violence, the police will come in, and the other parent will be asked to leave..

The Bill will also cause a lot more litigation at a terrible cost to both parents and their children, where only the legal profession and the courts, its counsellors, and others with a vested interest will benefit from the misery the Bill imposes.

One must question the wisdom of the Attorney General in cutting part of the funding of the Family Relationship Centres to give it to the Family Court's counsellors, a system that has proved over the years to be very one-sided and biased, whereas the Family Relationship Centres and their mediation have been a great success and helped many men and women..

The Lone Fathers Association Australia and Parents Without Partners Australia and other affiliated groups urge you to not pass this Bill until these areas of concern are



thoroughly addressed. I would welcome the opportunity to speak to our submission during the Senate hearing.

Thank you

Yours sincerely

B C Williams BEM JP CMC

30 June 2011