



**The Hon Jenny Macklin MP**  
**Minister for Families, Housing, Community Services**  
**and Indigenous Affairs**

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The Hon John Murphy MP  
Chair  
Standing Committee on Pensions  
PO Box 6021  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600



Dear Mr Murphy

Thank you for your letter of 25 August 2011 to the Minister for Health and Ageing, the Hon Nicola Roxon MP, containing a petition on the implementation of the National Disability Insurance Scheme. Your letter was referred to me as the National Disability Insurance Scheme falls within my portfolio responsibilities.

On 10 August 2011 the Prime Minister, the Hon Julia Gillard MP, released the Productivity Commission's final report into care and support for people with disability.

The Australian Government asked the Productivity Commission to examine reform of disability support services because we believe that the system we have today is not delivering the kind of care and support Australians expect for people with disability.

The Productivity Commission agreed, finding that the current disability support system is underfunded, unfair, fragmented and inefficient, and gives people with disability little choice. It provides no certainty that people will be able to access appropriate supports when needed.

A National Disability Insurance Scheme would entitle all Australians to support in the event of significant disability. And we are starting work right away by laying the foundations which are essential for the launch of a National Disability Insurance Scheme. This includes working with the states and territories to:

- develop common assessment tools, so people's eligibility for support can be assessed fairly and consistently, based on their level of need;
- put in place service and quality standards, so that people with disability can expect high quality support irrespective of what disability they have or how they acquired it; and
- build workforce capacity so we have more trained staff to support people with disabilities.

This work will also involve developing rigorous timelines, milestones and benchmarks to support the delivery of these and other essential foundation reforms, and hold governments accountable for progress.

The Government has started work – with states and territories who are principally responsible for funding and delivering disability support services – to fundamentally reform disability care and support.

Through the Council of Australian Governments, on 19 August 2011, the leaders of all state and territory governments agreed with the Australian Government that major reform of disability care and support is needed through a National Disability Insurance Scheme.

On 7 October 2011, I was pleased to announce the appointment of an Advisory Group of disability experts and advocates to work closely with all governments to lay the foundations for a National Disability Insurance Scheme.

The Government is committed to delivering a National Disability Insurance Scheme. If you want to get updates as we progress on the path to reform, you can register at <http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/sa/disability/progserv/govtint/Pages/ndis.aspx>

Thank you again for writing.

Yours sincerely

**JENNY MACKLIN MP**