

SUBMISSION NO. 140

AUTHORISED: 1-06-05 *Adoption*

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 28 April 2005 4:07 PM
To: Committee, FHS (REPS)
Subject: Submission- Inquiry into Adoption of Children from Overseas

The Committee Secretary,
Standing Committee on Family and Human Services

Dear Sir/ Madam,

Please consider my submission in relation to the second term of reference-

2. Any inconsistencies between the benefits and entitlements provided to families with their own birth children and those provided to families who have children adopted from overseas.

We returned from China on 10 April with our beautiful adopted daughter of 15 months and our happiness simply defies words.

I am writing in relation to the fact that our family, along with approximately 85% of other families adopting from overseas, are not eligible for the maternity allowance. This is because our baby is over 6 months of age at adoption.

Regardless of the fact that we incur all the same costs as families having birth children in relation to setting up the nursery and buying prams, car seats etc. And despite the fact that our out of pocket adoption expenses are around \$30 000, whilst according to two friends who have just given birth, their out of pocket medical expenses for the birth are around \$1 500.

I, like most adoptive mothers, must return to work simply to help the family budget cover the adoption expenses. We cannot afford for me to take my full unpaid leave entitlement.

On the radio recently, I heard one family (with a birth child) say they were putting their "baby bonus" payment towards the cost of a new boat! I am a part-time worker. Were I to qualify for this payment, I could afford to take another 17 weeks off work, enabling me to spend this time loving, nurturing and bonding with my little girl who has been through so much in her short life. 17 more weeks with her mum, rather than being in child care. Surely she deserves this just as much as that family deserve their boat!

It makes me terribly sad on behalf of my daughter that the government does not feel that our family is as worthy of this entitlement as a family with a birth child is. Why are we not? Is it because we are such a minority group that our needs and those of our children can simply be swept under the carpet?

I want my daughter to grow up being proud of her Chinese heritage. I want her to be proud to be an Australian. I wanted her to grow up believing that in Australia we are all considered equal- except that now I don't believe that's true, if the example set to her by the government right from the outset is anything to go by.....

Thank you for reading my submission

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NSW

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