

Additional Comments by the Australian Greens

Australian National Preventive Health Agency (Abolition) Bill 2014 [Provisions]

1.1 The Australian National Preventative Health Agency was established to focus on preventive health programs that specifically target lifestyle risk factors, such as obesity, alcohol and tobacco use. The Agency has successfully delivered national health prevention programs and played an important role in co-ordinating research into preventative health initiatives.

1.2 At a time when greater investment and accountability in health care and preventative health is critical, the Australian Greens are concerned that the abolition of ANPHA and question whether the Commonwealth Department of Health will be funded and capable of meeting the complex challenges of overseeing national preventative health research and initiatives. The Greens are also concerned that the Department of Health will not be able to expand the work of ANPHA to include oral health and diet.

1.3 The Australian Greens share the concerns expressed by the Consumers Health Forum of Australia and the Public Health Association of Australia that the bill is too narrowly focused on immediate cost savings and that the minimal savings the Government will reap from the abolition of ANPHA will be subsumed by the rise of presentations of otherwise preventable chronic illnesses to the health care system.

Senator Richard Di Natale

