

# Labor Senators' Dissenting Report

1.1 Labor Senators are concerned by the Government's proposed changes to remove the requirement for businesses to report serious injuries, illnesses or deaths associated with food products (Part 1 – Removal of reporting requirement). The following comments will relate to Part 1 of the bill which deals with these issues.

1.2 Labor Senators do not believe the Government has sufficiently made the case for relaxing these reporting requirements and are not willing to support measures which may compromise consumer safety.

1.3 Labor Senators support measures designed to reduce the compliance burden on Australian business and promote efficiency and productivity. However, this needs to be balanced against protections to consumers. Given the number of recent high-profile cases of serious injury, illness and even death as a result of unsafe food products, the Parliament should adopt a conservative approach.

1.4 These concerns were mirrored in evidence presented to the inquiry. CHOICE, a leading independent consumer advocacy group, stated:

We believe that if this Bill proceeds there is the possibility that reporting of food-related deaths, injuries and illnesses as a result anaphylactic reactions may not occur. In addition, we have been unable to clarify whether State and Territory-level reporting requirements are up-to-date and adequate.<sup>1</sup>

1.5 Labor Senators also note that no evidence was received regarding Part 1 from the ACCC or state and territory governments, with the exception of New South Wales. This raises concern that there has not been sufficient consultation on these measures.

1.6 At a time when government should be reassuring Australians about their food supply and improving food regulations, this legislation would potentially undermine consumer safety.

Australians have a right to know that their food is safe. This is why Labor Senators are not inclined to support the removal of this consumer protection requirement.

## Recommendation 1

**1.7 Labor Senators recommend that the Senate amend the Competition and Consumer Amendment (Deregulatory and Other Measures) Bill 2015 to remove Part 1.**

**Senator Sam Dastyari**  
**Deputy Chair**

---

1 See: Choice, *Submission 5*, p. 1.

