

Mr Elton Humphery
Committee Secretary
Community Affairs
Legislation Committee
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Mr Humphery,

The Older Women's Network NSW have received notification of the governments intention to propose changes to the Family Assistance , Social Security and Veterans' Affairs Legislation Amendment (2005 Budget and Other Measures) Bill 2006.

It is our understanding, having only received this information today, that written submissions addressing the issues therein are due in by due by tomorrow 10 March, 2006, so at this stage all we can do is consider the material that was sent, and comment briefly on it.

The Older Women's Network would like the committee to address the following issues raised in the proposed changes which are of the most concern to members of our network, principally:

- the drastic reduction of the possibility of claiming a retrospective payment from 52 to just 12 weeks
- the lack of promotion/profile of the benefit, therefore those who may be eligible to claim a benefit are often unaware of its existence
- eligible parties often don't lodge a claim because they are unaware that this particular benefit is not income or asset tested
- often care has commenced long before anyone informs them of their right to claim, so they may think it's too late bother
- other problems: medical, legal, emotional, social will make dealing with lodgement a low priority

We trust that these matters will be given careful consideration.

Yours sincerely,
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