

Senate Economics Legislation Committee – Opening Statement

Thank you, Chair.

I do have a brief statement to make, to address the absence of an individual who has appeared with regularity before this committee over many years.

Mr Mike Lawson will finish his long career with the Australian Public Service later this month, retiring to focus on his health and his family.

While he cannot be here in person, his commitment to the Australian Public Service has been of such a calibre that it is deserving of being recorded here today.

From his 1989 commencement in the Bureau of Industry Economics, Mr Lawson has worked in various iterations of the 'Industry department', and been at the forefront of the big shifts in industry policy over the last three decades. Standout achievements include Mr Lawson's contribution to the transition of Australian industry and manufacturing policy, and leading the development of the Government's Industry Competitiveness Agenda.

Approaching even the most challenging and complex situations and stakeholders with grace, good humour and empathy, Mike has earned the respect of all who worked with him across both government and industry.

Mike's distinguished service to the Australian public and to governments on both sides of politics was recognised formally in 2016, with a Public Service Medal for outstanding public service to industry reform.

This accolade was followed in 2017 by his promotion to Deputy Secretary in the then Department of Industry, Innovation and Science, the position from which he now retires.

Mike's intellect, decency and dedication reflect the best of our APS values and his leadership, knowledge and collegiality will be very much missed in the portfolio.

It's therefore appropriate to formally reflect those years of service, on the record, plus wish Mike well for a speedy recovery and well-earned retirement.

Thank you Chair.