

Mrs Louise Markus  
Shadow Minister for Veterans Affairs

The Honourable Bob Baldwin  
Shadow Minister for Defence Science, Personnel and  
Assisting Shadow Minister for Defence.

I wish to object to the proposed changes being implemented next year by the Government to bring military superannuation under the same umbrella as other Commonwealth employees, via the proposed *Government Superannuation Schemes Bill 2010*.

To combine all retirement and superannuation schemes into the one basket would undermine the unique status of those who enlist in the Services of those who sign away their basic rights to the Nation. Military personnel, unlike their civilian counterparts, are required to take up arms and defend our country therefore putting their lives at risk more so than those who enter into other government departments. The unique requirements of military service bring greater risk of personal injury to Service personnel that impacts on their entire life and their family who suffer hardships alongside their partners related war services and the rigors of military life.

Military service needs separate considerations and, as the Prime Minister has stated, **Military service is of the highest calling our country can ask of its citizens**. It is the Government's responsibility to ensure that our country employs and properly trains the right people to do what is asked of them (including the ultimate sacrifice) and then it is also the responsibility of governments to ensure these men and women are treated fairly during their engagement and well after the call to duty is done.

This new proposal will be resisted by all ex-servicemen and women along with their family members within our organizations.

I also wish to object to the proposed composition of the Board where the Board is stacked with 3 ACTU members to 2 Service members who would easily be out voted on matters addressing Service related issues.

I understand that the **Maximum Benefits Limit** has been increased and backdated for Commonwealth Public servants but not for Military personnel. The Military Superannuation Review identified this as **Unfair** and recommended it be **“fully abolished” before the implementation date of (any) new scheme**.

I trust that you will support serving and ex-Service personnel in these matters.

John Schmidtchen  
Lieutenant Colonel ( Retired)