



Vision 2020 Australia

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Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee
Department of the Senate
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
Australia

Dear Sir/Madam

Overseas Aid (Millennium Development Goals) Bill 2013

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Bill. Vision 2020 Australia and its members support and welcome the proposed Overseas Aid (Millennium Development Goals) Bill 2013.

The intent of the Bill is supported in principle as it seeks to increase the commitment to Australia's official development assistance (ODA) program to a fixed timetable and focusses on transparency and accountability of the aid program through the creation of an independent Commissioner for aid effectiveness.

The increase of ODA target to 0.7% GNI by 2021 is supported in general. In the short term, however, Vision 2020 Australia would like to see the existing commitment of 0.5% of GNI realised. With many delays and changes to the target date and more recently the diversion of aid funds for domestic asylum seeker costs, having a binding timetable for the implementation of increased funding for Australia's ODA is critical.

Similarly, Vision 2020 Australia supports the establishment of an independent Commissioner for aid effectiveness to evaluate the aid program so improvements can be made to programs and policy. It would also support Australia's leadership role in this sector. Vision 2020 Australia would like to see the role of the Commissioner and process for appointing the Commissioner further detailed in the Bill to ensure this critical role is truly Independent and can have the maximum impact on necessary reforms for aid effectiveness.

Yours sincerely

Jennifer Gersbeck
Chief Executive Officer