



## PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA

### Senate Community Affairs References Committee

## Centrelink's automated debt-recovery system opportunities to speak to the committee

The Senate Community Affairs Committee will hold public hearings for its inquiry into Centrelink's automated debt –recovery system at locations around Australia over the coming weeks.

The committee is examining the design, scope, cost-benefit analysis, contracts awarded and implementation of the Better Management of the Social Welfare System initiative, and is interested to hear from individuals who have experience of the automated debt-recovery system.

"It is very important for the committee to hear first-hand accounts from individuals who have been impacted by the automated debt-recovery system, so the committee is allocating time for this at each of its public hearings over the next few weeks" said committee Chair, Senator Rachel Siewert.

Anyone who wishes to make a short, three minute statement to the committee at one of its hearings please email the committee secretariat to register their interest: [community.affairs.sen@aph.gov.au](mailto:community.affairs.sen@aph.gov.au).

Opportunities to speak will be allocated in the order in which they are received.

"If anyone would prefer to speak to the committee in private, they should let the secretariat know this when they register", Senator Siewert said.

Details of the next four hearings are as follows:

Monday 10 April 2017 – Adelaide

Tuesday 11 April 2017 – Melbourne

Wednesday 19 April 2017 – Sydney

Friday 21 April 2017 - Perth

Information about each of the committee's public hearings will be placed on the committee's website as it becomes available.

Information about what to do if you would like to register to speak to the committee is attached to this media release.

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#### DATE REFERRED

08 February 2017

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#### SUBMISSIONS CLOSE

19 April 2017

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#### NEXT HEARINGS

10 April–Adelaide

11 April–Melbourne

19 April–Sydney

21 April–Perth

26 April–Hobart

27 April–Launceston

3 May–Townsville

16 May–Wyong

18 May–Brisbane  
and Caboolture

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#### REPORTING DATE

21 June 2017

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#### COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Senator Rachel Siewert  
(Chair)

Senator Jonathon Duniam  
(Deputy Chair)

Senator Sam Dastyari

Senator Louise Pratt

Senator Linda Reynolds

Senator Murray Watt

Senator Helen Polley

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#### CONTACT THE COMMITTEE

Senate Standing  
Committees  
on Community Affairs  
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Canberra ACT 2600

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[community.affairs.sen@aph.gov.au](mailto:community.affairs.sen@aph.gov.au)

## How to register your interest in speaking to the committee:

If you, or someone you know, would like to speak to the committee, please email the following information to the committee as soon as possible to register your interest:

<b>Preferred hearing location:</b> <i>eg Adelaide</i>	
<b>Title</b> <i>eg Mr, Ms, Mrs, Miss</i>	
<b>First name:</b> <i>eg: Jenny</i>	
<b>Family name:</b> <i>eg: Citizen</i>	
<b>Telephone number:</b> <i>eg 02 62773005</i>	
<b>Email address:</b> <i>eg: jenny.citizen@hotmail.com</i>	
Would you prefer to speak to the committee at a <b>public or private hearing session?</b> (See * below)	

### **Please note:**

*This information will only be used to contact you in relation to the committee's hearings. It will not be made public or provided to anyone other than members of the committee and its staff.*

## What happens next

Requests to speak to the committee will be processed in the order in which they are received. The committee's staff will allocate a time to each individual on the day they have requested, taking account of any requests to speak in public or in private.

If you are allocated a time to speak, you will receive an email advising the time and panel number that you have been allocated and confirming the hearing location. You will be sent a witness form to complete and information on the protection of witnesses and parliamentary privilege.

If all time slots for individual statements at the hearing you would like to attend have been allocated, you will receive an email telling you this. You can still attend and listen to the hearing.

## What to expect on the day of the hearing

\* Most committee hearings are held in public and anyone is welcome to come and listen. The audio of each public hearing will also be broadcast live on the internet:

[www.aph.gov.au/News\\_and\\_Events/Watch\\_Parliament](http://www.aph.gov.au/News_and_Events/Watch_Parliament). Private hearings are restricted to those witnesses giving evidence, committee members and secretariat staff.

A transcript is made of each hearing and the transcripts of public hearings are published on the committee's website. Transcripts of private sessions are not published.

When it is time for individuals to speak to the committee, the Chair of the committee will invite the individuals in each panel to come forward to the witness table. Each individual will be asked to state their first name and to confirm that they have received information about the protection of witnesses and parliamentary privilege.

Each individual will have the opportunity to speak to the committee for three (3) minutes. At the conclusion of your time, a bell will sound and you should finish your sentence and then hand the microphone to the next person.

Members of the committee may ask you some questions about what you have said.

Further information about what to expect when attending a Senate committee hearing is available on the Senate website: [Attending a public hearing](#)