



**Minister for Environment; Disability Services; Electoral Affairs
Deputy Leader of the Legislative Council**

Our ref: 62-18166

Senator Hollie Hughes
Committee Chair
Senate Select Committee on Autism

autism.sen@aph.gov.au

Dear Senator Hughes

Thank you for your email received in this office on 13 December 2019, regarding the establishment of the Select Committee on Autism (Committee).

I appreciate you for informing me about the Committee and inviting me to make a submission. I believe this will be an important inquiry, and I am pleased to see that the Committee has established broad terms of reference. A scope that goes beyond diagnostic services and the National Disability Insurance Scheme is beneficial as achieving positive outcomes for people with autism depends greatly on being able to access a range of inclusive services such as health, education and support to find and maintain employment.

I also appreciate the Committee's call for individuals with autism to participate in the inquiry, since this supports their right to be included in discussions that affect them. Their personal stories will no doubt show the valuable contribution that people with autism make to our community, as well as highlighting the need to make services and supports that are currently available more inclusive so that individuals can fully participate in social and economic life.

I have directed the Western Australian Department of Communities to develop a submission to the Committee over the coming weeks. I look forward to reading your findings, particularly regarding the need for a National Autism Strategy and any opportunities to improve State Government services.

Once again, thank you for writing.

Yours sincerely

Hon Stephen Dawson MLC
MINISTER FOR DISABILITY SERVICES

13 JAN 2020