

For Mrs Louise Markus, MP and The Honourable Bob Baldwin MP.

In response to your invitation to submit to the Senate Committee examining the above draft Bill, I advise my objection to having my superannuation arrangements being amalgamated with other public schemes simply for the financial expediency of the Government. Defence Force superannuation schemes were founded on the premise that the service and sacrifice of servicemen deserved special recognition. This underpinned the Defence Force Retirement and Death Benefits (DFRDB), which initially was a pace-setter amongst public superannuation schemes and of which I am a member. However over the past 35 years other schemes, especially the PSS and CSS, have taken and introduced the differential and advantageous aspects of the DFRDB, to the extent the Government now considers it would be advantageous to amalgamate. In my view this is another example of how the Government makes mileage out of servicemen when it suits them, eg, Anzac Day, troops leaving or returning from active service, etc, yet otherwise considers them to be just another group of public servants. Having their post-service benefits come under the trusteeship of a group Government appointees and trade union representatives is further denigration of their ex-service conditions. We are already suffering from the detrimental indexation formula applied to our superannuation and the thrust of the Bill appears to be turning the dagger in the backs of the ex-service community. The ex-service community deserves recognition of its contribution to the military policies of the Government over many years and the obvious way to do this is to maintain the advantages of the present arrangements. This cannot happen under the arrangements proposed in the draft Bill.

Wal Farquhar