

Submission to the Senate Inquiry on
Family Assistance Legislation Amendment (Child Care Budget Measures) Bill 2010

Dear Senators,

1. Endeavour Forum Inc. is a pro-family women's organisation with members in all Australian states and which has special consultative status with the Economic & Social Council (ECOSOC) of the United Nations.
2. In general we support the indexation of government payments, but as the Child Care Rebate is quite unjustly only available to mothers in the paid workforce, we support the capping of it in this instance.
3. Although this may not be relevant to your inquiry, we wish to remind you again that pre-school children are far better off cared for by their own parents in their home. Recent studies quoted in the Melbourne Herald Sun show that the children of mothers in the paid workforce are more prone to obesity than the children of full-time homemakers. This is probably due to a number of factors, e.g. more take-away meals high in fat and salt, less exercise, more TV watching. It is inconsistent for the government on the one hand to be waging a health battle against obesity and on the other hand to be trying to "increase women's attachment to the workforce" by offering child care rebates and paid parental leave.
4. Attached is a letter from Beverly Smith, a Canadian colleague, who has researched various forms of child care, and is an adviser to Endeavour Forum Inc. on this issue. Please read her letter carefully on the incidence of infections, emotional distress and other disadvantages of placing infants in long day care.
5. All mothers need baby-sitting from time to time. The child care rebate should be available as a direct payment to all mothers of pre-school children.
6. If you are holding hearings on this Bill or on issues related to child care, we would be happy to make a further verbal submission.

Mrs. Babette Francis,
National & Overseas Co-ordinator,
Endeavour Forum Inc.

2nd June 2010