

**From:**  
**To:** [Community Affairs Committee \(SEN\)](#)  
**Subject:** Submission to the Inquiry into the National Disability Insurance Scheme Bill 2012  
**Date:** Thursday, 17 January 2013 11:18:02 AM

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Please consider this email a formal submission by me to the Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs Inquiry into the National Disability Insurance Scheme Bill 2012.

The current disability system has many problems that need to be addressed.

After 11yrs with the same wheelchair, I discovered the underside of the frame had worn through to the point that it was bound to break and collapse at any moment. Every time I was getting in and out of my car, I'd take the wheels off my chair to put them into the car, before picking the frame up off the ground and putting it into the car as well. Over the years, simply resting the wheelchair frame on the ground slowly wore through it.

As a full time worker, a parent and someone with family and friends living more than 40mins drive away, my wheelchair is critical to my livelihood and my overall well being.

I contacted the Aids and Equipment Program and went through the assessment process. As there was clearly an urgency to replace my wheelchair, I was added to the 'emergency' list for funding. I was devastated to learn that the emergency waiting list was going to be several months to a year before funding would become available.

In the end, it was an unnecessarily anxious wait for several months until the news finally came through that the funding was available, and another 6-8weeks until my wheelchair finally arrived.

If my chair had have succumbed to the worn frame, I simply don't know what I could have done to continue working and being socially engaged. Hiring a wheelchair would not be possible as I'm short statured and need a wheelchair to suit my particular body shape and size, an off-the-shelf hire just wouldn't have been suitable. Hire chairs are also invariably large, 'hospital' type chairs which aren't built light and mobile enough for someone like me who is regulary in and out of a car.

People with a disability should not have to live in fear of 'making it through' with ailing equipment. Being mobile is crucial to me being a productive and engaged person in my community and this part of the system has to be reformed to provide more funding and to provide it in a far more responsive manner.

The main features of the NDIS that will make a difference to the community are:

Ensure support and equipment is available when needed, Better access to education and work opportunities, More opportunities to participate in the community

The most important services for the NDIS to provide are:

Therapy and allied health services, Equipment and home/vehicle modifications, Support for families and carers

I support the introduction of the NDIS.

If properly implemented and resourced, the NDIS has the chance to make an awesome impact on the lives of people with a disability and their families, as well as on the lives of carers.

It will provide people with a disability with more ability and confidence to become more actively involved in their local communities, and for many to move from being (and feeling like) a receiver, to a contributor.

I agree for my submission to be made public

Regards,

Mr Darren Cunningham