

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 12 May 2005 10:46 PM
To: Committee, FHS (REPS)
Subject: Submission- Inquiry into Adoption of Children from Overseas

Thankyou for the opportunity to present some comments.

Firstly I will not re-hash the main points where adoptive families feel they are heavily discriminated against. You have heard them by now. They are of course the baby bonus, forced (& for the most part unpaid leave), different rules & different costs for different states, limited programmes and no tax deductibility for adoption expenses in comparison to other countries.

Needless to say we need reform in a big way. It is no wonder we are so small in numbers when we live in a country which does very little to support us.

One thing that has always struck me in this inequity is how I will explain to my child why I thought her life would be valued just as much as the next child in this country when clearly it isn't. Why did I bring her into a country which is obviously doing everything in it's power to deter families from adopting. What does this say to her? It hurts me to know this and I worry about the day when she realises this too. Why can't our government just see as we do that it is actually a privilege for us to be able to parent this child.

How do I also explain that if I were to hit the IVF trail the government would pay & pay & pay thousands of dollars on the remote possibility I would fall pregnant and have a biological child; yet they will do little to assist us should we chose to adopt a child; not a remote possibility of a child; but a child; living & breathing. A child that actually exists in this world.

I happen to think as most parents do that I am blessed in life big time because of my child. She has opened my eyes and enriched the lives of so many people just by being here. This country can count themselves lucky to have my child here. I am sure she will make her own mark in this country and will one day be supporting through her taxes these very same people who discriminated against her & her family.

Our government wants to increase the population to provide for our ageing population but it is clearly discriminatory in how that increase happens. I am at times ashamed to be an Australian and feel also we may very well have been better off moving to our daughter's country or to a more adoption-friendly country rather than have her move here. At least then maybe our taxes would also be distributed more equitably.

Thankfully though my daughter is loved and cherished by everyone she touches in life. We struggle financially as do most couples who have a 2nd mortgage (their adoption mortgage) but at the end of the day we would and are doing it all again despite the lack of support our government shows. It is still very much worth it. Sadly though we will have to stop at 2 because we

won't be able to afford to do it again. We are just lucky enough that equity in our home has afforded us this opportunity twice.

So we hope as we always do when we write letters again and again that this enquiry will actually generate change and provide adoptive families with what every other Australian family has & expects; that being "a fair go".