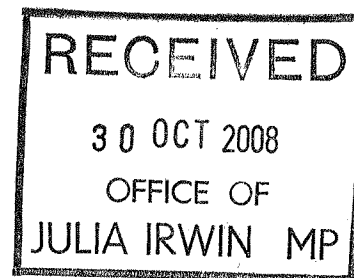
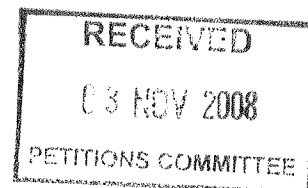




**THE HON JUSTINE ELLIOT MP
MINISTER FOR AGEING**



Mrs Julia Irwin MP
Chair
Standing Committee on Petitions
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600



Dear Mrs Irwin *Julia*

Thank you for your letter of 4 September 2008 to the Minister for Health and Ageing, the Hon Nicola Roxon MP, enclosing a petition about aged care homes operating Enterprise Bargaining Agreements for personal care assistants to receive such additional funding as is commensurate with the pay rise. Your letter has been referred to me as the Minister for Ageing.

The people working in aged care homes are an important part of the care that is provided. The presence of an appropriately skilled and motivated workforce in aged care is a key part of providing the high quality of aged care that older Australians deserve.

The Australian Government is increasing funding to the sector to enable higher quality care. Over the next four years, funding for aged and community care will reach more than \$40 billion, including \$28.6 billion to support residents of aged care homes. In 2008-09, Government funding for each day a resident spends in residential care will be about 8 per cent more than it was in 2007-08 for a resident of the same level of frailty.

This increased level of funding will enable care providers to deliver quality aged care which is important to the motivation and wellbeing of staff in aged care. The Government is committed to ensuring that people in aged care homes receive quality care and are treated with dignity and respect and has in place a robust accreditation system which is intended to instil a culture of continuous improvement in aged care homes.

Under the *Aged Care Act 1997* aged care providers are responsible for using Government subsidies to ensure that there are adequate numbers of appropriately skilled staff to meet the individual care needs of residents. It is important to note that the Government is not responsible for determining wages and conditions for staff in the aged care sector. In general, these are agreed between employers and employees under a variety of industrial instruments.

I appreciate you writing on this matter.

Yours sincerely

JUSTINE ELLIOT

23 OCT 2008