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### Issues Specific to Mature Age Job Applicants

I wish to submit the following for your committee's consideration.

In 1995 my husband, 52, died from prostate cancer. I was 49 and employed, as I still am, on a casual part-time basis in a licensed club.

Over the past three years I have applied for every job in my locality for which I am remotely qualified, with no success, despite being tertiary educated, with a Bachelor of Arts majoring in Politics and Sociology.

In 1997 I applied to do postgraduate studies in Rehabilitation Counselling by distance mode, over two years, from Sydney University.

Despite achieving Distinctions and Credits, and indicating my willingness to move to any inland country area, the Commonwealth Rehabilitation Service has not replied, much less produced a job offer, although there is a shortage of trained people in this field.

The HECS cost of my course has been very difficult to meet out of an annual income of \$21,000 of which \$8,000 automatically goes to pay my mortgage.

When I commenced my course the HECS was only automatically levied when annual income was about \$30,000, but your government subsequently lowered this to about \$20,000.

Subsequent to my husband's death, I applied and was appointed to the Board of Southern Area Health Service and re-appointed for a further 4 year term; appointed to the Radiation Advisory Council of NSW; appointed to the South East Regional Council of Adult and Community Education.

As you would be aware, these positions involve much reading and a level of understanding of complex issues, as well as considerable travel over an area the size of Tasmania.

I am well-educated, articulate, have an extensive administrative and retail job history. At 52 I am free of family commitments, have energy, enthusiasm, desire and commitment, yet cannot find anyone willing to employ me.

In summary, I see barriers to employment as:-

- the escalating cost of further education;
- attitudes of employers towards mature-age people.

Trusting this information is of help to your committee.