



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs

Inquiry into older people and the law

MEDIA ALERT

Issued: 9 August 2007

Chairman: Peter Slipper MP

Public hearing on older people and the law

Friday 17 August 2007

Parliament House Canberra

The question of how well the legal system meets the needs of older Australians will be examined at a public hearing in Canberra on 17 August by the House of Representatives Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee. The Committee will take evidence on how the legal system deals with fraud and financial abuse against older people, the administration of power of attorney provisions, family agreements, discrimination, and barriers to older Australians accessing legal services.

“The Committee has held public hearings in most capital cities across Australia and has heard from a wide variety of government agencies, service providers, community organisations, advocacy groups and individuals”, Committee Chairman Peter Slipper said. “This final public hearing in Canberra will provide an opportunity for the Committee to further question individuals and organisations on the issues under consideration”.

Organisations appearing before the Committee in Canberra include the Council on the Ageing, the Australian Securities and Investments Commission, Alzheimer’s Australia, the ACT Disability, Aged and Carer Advocacy Service, the Attorney-General’s Department and the Australian Bankers’ Association.

Around two and a half million Australians are aged 65 years and older. Population projections of the Australian Bureau of Statistics indicate that in 2051 there will be between 7 and 9 million people in that age group and one in two Australians will be older than 50 years. “The proportion of older people in the Australian population will increase rapidly over the next 50 years and our legal regimes need to be responsive to that demographic change”, Mr Slipper said. “The Committee wants to know whether the various statutes are doing enough to deal with some of the legal issues that are important to older Australians”.

The public hearing will be held in Committee Room 2R2, Parliament House Canberra.

For media interviews:

Please contact the Committee Chairman, Peter Slipper MP on (07) 5443 3555 (electorate office) or on (02) 6277 4975 (Canberra).

Or Mr Slipper’s media adviser, Richard Bruinsma, on 0417 486 673.

For background information, including the full terms of reference and copies of submissions, please contact the Committee Secretariat on (02) 6277 2358 or visit the inquiry website at:

<http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/laca/olderpeople/index.htm> .

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