



Bronwyn Bishop MP

Chairman

House of Representatives Standing Committee on
Family & Human Services

MEDIA RELEASE

BB050301

18 April 2005

Public Hearing Inquiry Into Balancing Work & Family

Parliament House Sydney, Tuesday 19 April 2005

The House of Representatives Standing Committee on Family & Human Services will hold its first public hearing for the Balancing Work and Family Inquiry in Sydney on 19 April 2005.

Mrs Bishop, Chairman of the Committee, said that the public hearing would call on witnesses to provide evidence on a range of issues relevant to many Australians and the choices they make in relation to having children and raising families.

“Australia’s fertility rate is currently at 1.7 births per couple which is below that required to replace our population. This has been a major contributing factor to an ageing Australia and one that will see our population shrink over time”, Mrs Bishop said.

“It is worth noting that despite Australia’s declining birth rate, recent studies have shown that most young Australian adults want to have children and most parents with one child want to have another”.

Mrs Bishop said, that as policy makers, we need to understand why many are delaying childbearing and then having smaller families than they originally desired. The Committee will examine the disincentives to starting families as well as how to make it easier for parents, who so wish, to return to the paid workforce after having had children.

The Committee will hear from the Taskforce on Care Costs; a welfare group; an employers’ group; an academic and; not least, a mother. This broad range of witnesses highlights the many interests affected as we all seek to achieve sustainable balances between work and family commitments. The hearing is open to all members of the public.

PUBLIC HEARING SCHEDULE

Venue: Jubilee Room, NSW Parliament House, Macquarie Street, Sydney.

9.45 am – 10.45 am	Taskforce on Care Costs
11.00 am – 12.00 pm	Catholic Welfare Australia
12.00 pm – 12.45 pm	Ms Louise John
1.45 pm – 2.30 pm	Australian Computer Society
2.30 pm – 3.15 pm	Social Policy Research Centre, UNSW
3.15 pm	End of program

For media interview: Please contact Damien Jones on **0409 147 247** at the electorate office of the Committee chairman the Hon Mrs Bronwyn Bishop MP.

For further information on the public hearing: contact the Committee secretariat on (02) 6277 4566 or email fhs.reps@aph.gov.au or visit the website at www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/fhs