

15<sup>th</sup>, July 2008

Submission No. 163  
(Inq into better support for carers)

A.O.C. 26/6/08

Secretary  
Inquiry into Better Support for Carers  
Standing Committee on Family, Community, Housing and Youth  
PO Box 6021  
House of Representatives  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Secretary

I wish to make a submission to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Family, Community, Housing and Youth's Inquiry into Better Support for Carers.

*My role as a carer has been a lifelong commitment by me, but also a commitment of my wife of nearly 30 years and our children. We care for my older brother who has the condition known as Cerebral Palsy; Russell has had this condition since birth and is now over 50 years of age. My mother and father were his carers until the day they died and it has been my decision to continue to ensure his lifestyle improves as best as possible as we can possibly do.*

*I contribute to society by maintaining my brother's lifestyle in his own home hence reducing the burden financially to the taxpayer to pay for all his needs.*

*I think this should be recognised by offering to carers and their families that share the care some tax breaks or financial benefit that can compensate in some way with regards to the effects that the caring role plays in the reduction of career options or potential income opportunities that are available to non carers.*

*My caring role affects my life by limiting my income opportunities, it determines where I live and work, the amount of time I spend with family and at work, it impacts in regards to social interaction with peers and extended family due to the isolation aspect of being a carer. The type and size of car we buy, the duration / destination of holidays is always a problem due to suitable accommodation and added costs, where you shop, you name it there's an affect.*

*The practical measures that would better support me are immediate increase in the lifestyle support package that my brother currently receives and to consider the implementation of a fair, substantial subsidy scheme either*

*directly or through taxation measures that would assist financially in regards to the reduced income the caring role produces.*

*I already have the information available to best support my brother all I want is an even break so that I myself or my family does not become a burden on the taxpayer in the future by building my own retirement nest egg, which is impossible to do right now.*

*I try to pass the knowledge I have gained from being a lifelong carer to others as best I can, I am involved with a community based organisation that is fully government funded, so I do have access to most of the latest strategies to help carers.*

*Being a carer has affected me from a very young age, the day man landed on the moon I had to stay at home with my brother as his day centre was closed, the next day when I went to school I was called out for special treatment from a less than sympathetic teacher and labelled as a truant, this might not be such a big deal now but back then it was, I had to change schools, I was 12.*

*I do hope someone reads this submission and feel free to contact me anytime, I would do just about anything to make a life more bearable for anyone who comes under the title of carer.*

Thank you for taking my views into consideration as part of the Committee's Inquiry. I look forward to reviewing the recommendations you make in order to improve support for carers.

Yours sincerely

*Brian*