



House of Representatives Standing Committee on Family and Community Affairs	
Submission No:	85
Date Received:	14-7-03
Secretary:	

Dear Mrs Hull,

I read an article recently regarding your proposed shake-up of the Child Support Agency, which has led me to writing to you. I am grateful that at last a politician is looking into this, as I feel it is long overdue! I want to briefly tell you of my experiences with this agency.

I am a sole parent of a son, now fifteen, and after separating from his father, I tried unsuccessfully to obtain child support from him. Having no luck I eventually contacted legal Aid, who then put me in touch with the C.S.A. And so the merry-go-round began.

After years of getting absolutely nowhere I was persuaded to take him to court with the assurance that this would be successful. I obtained a court order in July 1995, which ruled that he pay \$160 per fortnight. His response to this was to resign from a job which paid over \$1000 a week. He is now working for himself, and owns several properties. I have felt during all this that the C.S.A. has done nothing to correct this, and at one point when I rang them I was told he had put "a privacy order" in place, so that I wasn't to be given any information. I was appalled at this, and wrote a letter of complaint.

The C.S.A. sent him a letter of debt in June 2002, informing him that he owed \$21,796. He then returned to court to have the debt overturned, which cancelled all monies owed.

To add with to injury I occasionally receive correspondence from the CIA to inform me that my payments will be increasing.

(From nothing to more nothing if they had no idea that the debt had been overturned, and I often feel that I have had to do their job for them. I have sent them countless letters, to no avail. When I informed them of the overturning of this debt, I was told, "He can't do that". Well, he has done it, and I have to accept it and let it go.

I have been bitterly disappointed in the lack of action taken by this agency, and have often wondered why they even exist. I'm sure there are many others in my position who feel the same way. So I sincerely wish you well in your endeavours to put this right, and thank you for raising an issue that has been over-looked for way too long.

Regards,
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