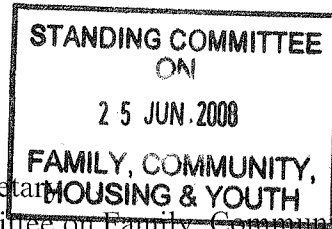


A.O.C. - 1/7/08

Submission No. 357
(Inq into better support for carers)



Committee Secretary
Standing Committee on Family, Community Housing and Youth
P O Box 6021
House of Representatives
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600
AUSTRALIA

Dear Secretary,

I would like to make a submission for better support for carers within the community.

I am a carer for our 17 year old son who has an intellectual disability and also some physical disabilities. He lives at home with us. (Mother, father and younger brother). We all work together to keep life as normal as possible. As you can imagine, it does have a huge impact on each one of us.

For us as a family is probably the constant supervision. Since he finished high school, I have given up my full time job to be home with him. He works 3 days a week from 8am to 3.20 pm. I drop him off and pick him up. Unfortunately for myself, this is difficult to find a job around these short hours and days, taking into account the travelling time. At the age of 42 years I would hate to think this is the end of my working career.

Like most parents, we also fear about the future and where they will live. Housing for a full working family is beyond most peoples reach. Our son earns \$1.81 an hour. It's going to be almost impossible for him to buy a place or even share it with someone.

I have worked in the disability area for some time now and I know there are a lot of people worse of than I am. We need to look after those who cannot do it for themselves. I would like to see the financial support given to families and also those who are older and still caring for someone. Like myself, I know a lot of people who find the cost of petrol and food becoming too much for what they earn. Our fuel bill for taking our son to and from work for those three days is more than he earns. He loves his job and it is very good for him mentally and physically to keep working, so I will endeavour to find work for myself no matter what to make sure he gets there.

Disability will always be a part of our lives. We need to make it possible so we don't have to live in poverty like so many do.

Please feel free to contact me anytime. I am more than happy to talk to someone.

Thank you for taking the time to read my letter.

Yours sincerely,

Sharon