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From: _____

To: Rishworth, Amanda (MP)
Subject: Workplace Bullying

Hello Amanda

I read with much interest today the following article on the Melbourne Herald Sun website –

THE federal government has launched a parliamentary inquiry into workplace bullying.

Employment Minister Bill Shorten has asked a House of Representatives committee to look at the nature, causes and extent of workplace bullying - a problem estimated to cost the economy between \$6 billion and \$36 billion a year.

The Education and Employment Committee will consider the best way to address and prevent bullying cultures, and ways to help affected workers return to work.

It will also examine whether existing regulatory frameworks provide a sufficient deterrent against workplace bullying.

Committee chair, Labor MP Amanda Rishworth, says bullying has serious consequences for individuals and the wider community.

"Every Australian has a right to feel safe and respected at work," she said in a statement.

Submissions to the committee close on Friday, June 29.

I was subjected to workplace bullying for a period of nearly three years, resulting in me having a nervous breakdown and requiring extensive psychiatric care for a period of 12 months (I was suicidal) and eventually having to walk away from my employer of ten years on the advice of my doctor, as my overall health had deteriorated substantially. My employer (an education provider) literally turned a blind eye to my situation as the manager concerned was a good friend of the then Minister for Education. It was ironic that as soon as this particular Minister for Education lost their education portfolio, the manager in question "decided to retire" the very next day.

I am writing to you as a show of support for the Committee of which you are now Chairman. It is a very real and terrifying practice in the workplace and if it wasn't for the support of my family, doctor and psychiatrist, I would not be sitting here today writing this email.

The outcome for me has been only a minor success, having survived the ordeal after extensive rehabilitation. I not only lost a good job and the very necessary (for me) wages it entailed, and I am now struggling to find alternative employment because of my age. I turned 61 this year, the very little superannuation I had has now gone after over 12 months of being unemployed and I am not entitled to any pension because my husband still works; in effect we have lost \$50,000.00 of income a year. We have also had to sell our home and buy something more affordable. The effects from workplace bullying is far reaching and is not only horrendous for the victim but, by extension, their families.

I wish you every success in your endeavour and am so thankful that this very real issue is being addressed.

Yours sincerely
