

## **Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee**

### **ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES – 11 FEBRUARY 2016 ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE**

#### **Department of Human Services**

**Topic:** 2015-16 MYEFO measure – Enhanced Welfare Payment Integrity

**Question reference number:** HS 40

**Senator:** Siewert

**Type of question:** Written

**Date set by the committee for the return of answer:** 4 April 2016

**Number of pages:** 1

#### **Question:**

- a) Where debt recovery occurs, will it focus on those with a capacity to pay, or will it apply even where individuals are unemployed / low income earners?
- b) Where DSS becomes aware that individuals that are not welfare recipients are earning untaxed income, does it provide that information to the ATO? For example, if they're caught through some of its online monitoring?

#### **Answer:**

- a) The measure targets those people, with debts, no longer in receipt of a Centrelink payment and who have the financial capacity to repay the debt. People reliant on the social welfare system will not be negatively impacted by this proposal as they already repay their debts through agreed withholdings from their social welfare payments.
- b) The Department of Human Services, through this measure, only identifies individuals who are in receipt of welfare payments and already have income reported to the Australian Taxation Office (ATO). During the course of assessing tip-offs, on occasion the department may identify allegations that warrant referral to the ATO.