

We at PLEDG, 80 families of children with disabilities ages 2 to 18, were gratified when the DSA came into being 15 years ago. We were proud to have supported it to get up. We were pleased to think that by the time our children would reach the work force they would be able to seek and secure careers and homes in their communities. Our Director and members have worked hard to get schools to accept inclusive education and we see some headway. We are so, so disappointed in the fact that you want to change this wonderful law in ways that won't force the closure of those immoral and outdated concentration sweatshops that but rather legitimise them. We support Caucus' position:

In the current form we do not support the Bill.

For the bill to be acceptable, section 5A must be changed to have the Standards and the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) included together in a disallowable instrument.

The current bill makes the Minister the sole determiner of the KPIs and are non-reviewable by the community and the Parliament.

The KPIs for standard nine (employment conditions) currently allow a host of loopholes for discrimination and exploitation in employment to continue.

We are seeking that wages below the federal minimum wage are determined by the Supported Wage System. This provides people with disability with the only available protection against exploitation.

Currently, many thousands of employees with disability are paid appallingly low wages that are determined by the employers. Employers use a range of assessment methods from 'pick a number' to 'convoluted schemes' that guarantee low wages. Wages as little as 50 cents per hour.

Many employees with disability are forced to agree to poor employment conditions for they are fearful of reprisals. Many employees are expected to negotiate employment contracts and agreements without either the capacity to understand or negotiate. The Commonwealth is aware of this and is not doing anything about it.

We too want these practices of exploitation to stop!"

Darrell Wills BA/MEd  
Project Director  
Educational Consultant  
for PLEDG Inc  
Unit 8, Number 8  
George Street  
Bunbury, Western Australia 6230  
Phone: 0897913455  
Fax: 0897216966  
mobile: 0419955012  
email: [pledgdw@gateway.net.au](mailto:pledgdw@gateway.net.au)