



AUSTRALIAN SENATE

COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

LEGISLATION COMMITTEE

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Health Insurance Amendment (Medicare Safety-nets) Bill 2005

On 10 August 2005 the Senate, on the recommendation of the Selection of Bills Committee, has referred the provisions of the above Bill to the Committee for inquiry and report by 5 September 2005.

The second reading speech relating to the Bill is attached for your information. The Bill, Explanatory Memorandum and the Parliamentary Library's Bills Digest may be accessed on the Internet at <http://www.aph.gov.au/ParlInfo/BillsNet/main.htm>

In recommending the reference of the Bill to the Committee, the Selection of Bills Committee provided the following issues for consideration:

- to examine the provisions of the Bill relating to increases in the Medicare safety net thresholds to ascertain how many Australian individuals and families will face higher out of pocket medical expenses as a result of the increased thresholds;
- the extent of the higher out of pocket expenses experienced by these individuals and families; and
- the implications for access and equity in health care for all Australians.

The Committee invites written submissions on the Bill. Due to the short timeframe for this inquiry the submission should be lodged with the Committee by Wednesday, 17 August 2005. The Committee prefers to receive submissions electronically as an attached document - email: community.affairs.sen@aph.gov.au – otherwise by fax (number 02 6277 5829).

The Committee intends to hold a public hearing on the Bill on Thursday, 18 August 2005.