



AUSTRALIAN SENATE

## COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

LEGISLATION COMMITTEE

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### Health Legislation Amendment Bill 2005

On 5 October 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 1 November 2005. [On 13 October 2005 the Senate extended the reporting date to 7 November 2005]

The Bill, Explanatory Memorandum and Minister's second reading speech 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 new powers to set conditions, limitations and restrictions on the circumstances in which Medicare benefits will be payable for health services; in particular to

- a) consider the evidence that these powers are necessary;
- b) identify if the Bill provides sufficient mechanisms to ensure that decisions to impose conditions, limitations and restrictions are made in line with scientific evidence;
- c) determine the need for appropriate structures to guarantee consumer and expert consultation in the decision making process; and
- d) examine the need for appeals mechanisms to prevent arbitrary application of the power.

The Senate has given the Committee a very short timeframe in which to examine the Bill and invites a short written submission. Comments should be lodged with the Committee by Wednesday, 12 October 2005. The Committee prefers to receive submissions electronically as an attached document – email: [community.affairs.sen@aph.gov.au](mailto: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 either Thursday, 13 or Friday, 14 October 2005.