



AUSTRALIAN SENATE

COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

LEGISLATION COMMITTEE

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National Health Amendment (Budget Measures – Pharmaceutical Benefits Safety Net) 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 increases in the Pharmaceutical Benefits Safety Net thresholds and new safety net and patient co-payment arrangements for some pharmaceutical benefits where the pharmaceutical benefit is supplied within 20 days of a previous supply to determine the implications for access and equity in relation to medicines for all Australians.

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 – 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.