



9 June 2009

Committee Secretary  
Senate Economics Committee  
Department of the Senate  
PO BOX 6100  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Sir/Madam

**Re: Inquiry into the Fairer Private Health Insurance Incentives Bill 2009 and two related bills**

The Australian Nursing Federation (ANF) is writing to respond to the invitation by the Senate Economics Committee to provide comment to the Inquiry into the Fairer Private Health Insurance Incentives Bill 2009, the Fairer Private Health Insurance Incentives (Medicare Levy Surcharge) Bill 2009 and the Fairer Private Health Insurance Incentives (Medicare Levy Surcharge – Fringe Benefits) Bill 2009.

The ANF strongly supports the proposed legislation to implement changes to private health insurance which will provide benefits for the majority of Australians and not just the higher income sector.

It is the position of the ANF that access to health care should be available to all citizens of Australian at the time of need, regardless of capacity to pay. This is best achieved through a publicly funded universal health insurance which ANF believes is an efficient and effective method for allocating health care resources affordably and equitably at the time of need.

The ANF's position on private health insurance is clearly articulated in its submission to the Inquiry into the Tax Laws Amendment (Medicare Levy Surcharge Thresholds) Bill 2008 (attached). Essentially it should not be the Government's responsibility to provide incentives for the private health insurance industry to attract buyers to its membership products. The ANF remains firm in its position of 2008 that the public monies currently expended on providing rebates to people to take out private health cover should more correctly be spent on ensuring a health system which provides access and equity to health care for all people in Australia.

As a member of the Australian Health Care Reform Alliance (AHCRA), the ANF shares the views expressed at the AHCRA Summit 2009, that the private health insurance rebate is poor policy and that public funds should not be used to support private insurance.

The industrial and professional organisation for nurses and midwives in Australia

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**ANF Journals**

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# australian nursing federation

ANF appreciates the opportunity to participate in the development of legislation which dismantles current inequalities in health care insurance cover. The ANF considers that the proposed changes to the health insurance cover will enable citizens on higher incomes to fulfill their responsibility as members of a civil society.

Should you require any additional information or wish to discuss this matter further please contact me on (03) 9602 8504 or [ged@anf.org.au](mailto:ged@anf.org.au).

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ged Kearney".

**Gerardine (Ged) Kearney**  
Federal Secretary

Encl. Copy of ANF submission to the Inquiry into the Tax Laws Amendment (Medicare Levy Surcharge Thresholds) Bill 2008, August 2008

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