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PRESIDENT
Mr Richard Bowden
CHIEF EXECUTIVE
Hon Dr Michael Armitage

Mr Elton Humphery
Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Mr Humphery

SUBMISSION – PRIVATE HEALTH INSURANCE (NATIONAL JOINT REPLACEMENT REGISTER LEVY) BILL 2009

The Australian Health Insurance Association (AHIA) thanks the Senate for the opportunity to make a contribution to the Senate Community Affairs Committee's inquiry into the provisions of the *Private Health Insurance (National Joint Replacement Register Levy) Bill 2009*.

The AHIA is the peak body for the Australian Private Health Insurance Industry. The AHIA represents 23 health funds, which collectively provide health care benefits to more than 10 million Australians.

The AHIA supports the proposed legislation. The Private Health Insurance Industry believes it should be incumbent upon those sponsors who wish to introduce prosthesis for use in the Australian health care system to demonstrate the device's efficacy, and quality and safety credentials.

Therefore, the AHIA endorses the use of cost recovery arrangements through each joint replacement prostheses sponsor to support the important reporting and monitoring role of the National Joint Replacement Register (NJRR).

The AHIA would also encourage the Community Affairs Committee to recommend to the Australian Government the establishment of other registries, in addition to the NJRR, to further promote patient safety in our health care system. For example, the creation of a registry in the cardiothoracic discipline, focusing on stents, pacemakers and defibrillators, would ensure the quality of those devices used.

The AHIA also encourages the Committee to recommend that the most efficacious method of establishing these new registries is for the Australian Government to provide funding to the registries in their initial stages. Ongoing funding can then be addressed once the registry is fully functional.

The AHIA believes that ultimately all prostheses and devices listed on the Prostheses List should be covered by post-market surveillance, ensuring the quality improvement of prostheses implanted



into Australians. In fact, the AHIA also believes that all prostheses should be subjected to rigorous clinical testing prior to their use in Australia, and their use being only allowed if there are demonstrable clinical benefits for those Australians who will have the devices implanted.

Please feel free to contact me on 02 6202 1000 for any further information related to the AHIA's submission to the Committee.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Armitage". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

HON DR MICHAEL ARMITAGE
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

3 June 2009