

The Hon Jane Lomax Smith MP  
Member for Adelaide



**Government  
of South Australia**

MC 08/2718

Senator Claire Moore  
Chairperson  
Community Affairs Standing Committee  
PO Box 6100  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600



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Dear Senator Moore

Thank you for your letter dated 13 October 2008 inviting submissions to the Inquiry into the Social Security and Veterans' Entitlements Legislation Amendment (School Requirements) Bill 2008. The Bill, which links Centrelink payments with children's attendance at school, seeks to promote greater responsibility by parents on income support for their children's education.

The South Australian Government is strongly supportive of measures that will improve the educational outcomes of children and young people. The link between poor educational outcomes and life outcomes is extensively documented and well understood.

To address this, the Department of Education and Children's Services has in place a range of strategies to respond to non-attendance, such as the School Retention Action Plan, various legislative instruments and attendance improvement procedures and strategies. By working closely in partnership with other portfolios and non-government agencies, these strategies work effectively to address many of the underlying issues for these children and their families.

It is on this basis that I recommend that before the widespread adoption of the measures outlined in the Bill, extensive piloting occurs over an extended period and in a diverse range of communities. Further, that rigorous evaluation occurs on the results of the pilots and a thorough analysis is undertaken on the effects on student and family welfare, health and welfare service providers, school staff, and particularly principals in small communities.

I am pleased to forward the South Australian Government submission to the Inquiry.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jane Lomax-Smith'.

Jane Lomax-Smith  
**MINISTER FOR EDUCATION  
MINISTER FOR MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE  
MINISTER FOR TOURISM  
MINISTER FOR THE CITY OF ADELAIDE**

17/11/08