



2nd July 2008

Economics Committee
The Senate
P O Box 6100
Canberra ACT 2600

Tax Laws Amendment
(Medicare Levy Surcharge Thresholds) Bill 2008

Dear Sir

I would like to support this Bill and say about time!

I've been writing to the previous administration over the last 11 years since the current level of threshold was introduced but to no avail. So I am particularly pleased to see at last a change proposed.

My thoughts about the change cover various grounds including equity. The current thresholds were set in 1997 and the then \$50,000 income level for singles and \$100,000 for couples should have been increased to \$75,000 at least, and \$150,000 for couples. The Bill goes slightly ahead of this to \$100,000 for singles and \$150,000 for couples but is still acceptable.

The new thresholds should be indexed as most others are to avoid getting out of whack in the future and penalising working families.

Even more radical the tax could be abolished and people left free to choose whether they wish to insure or not as they do with other items.

Also I've noticed a false argument that says as I am uninsured I will use the public hospital system. That is incorrect and in fact I self insure and cover my hospital costs myself, so recent eye operations for my wife and a back operation for me were undertaken in private and not public hospital facilities and fully paid for by me.

It is equally false to claim if people join health insurance schemes they will use private hospitals. Many do not and many insured still use public hospitals.

The other area I would canvas is value for money and suggest that a considerable reduction in health fund numbers, via mergers and amalgamations would reduce administration costs and hopefully the premiums which currently just seem to rise year on year regardless of the number of members.

So I implore you to pass the Bill through the Senate and give me and my wife some relief from this iniquitous tax impost.

Yours faithfully

MJ Cribbin

(Michael John CRIBBIN)