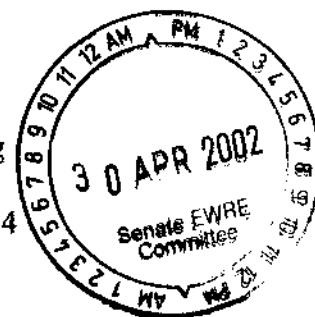


The Secretary
Senate Employment,
Workplace Relations,
Education Reference Committee,
Suite S1.61
Parliament House,
Canberra. ACT. 2600.

Wayne R Lang
4 Malvern Rd
Dimboola 3414
Victoria.



25th April 2002.

The Senate Committee.

I am a concerned sole parent (Widower) and wish to convey my thoughts to the Senate Inquiry into Deaf Education.

I have a son, Andrew who has severe to profound hearing loss; and attends the Dimboola Memorial Secondary College. He is 13 years of age, wears behind the ear hearing aides and uses a radio frequency (RF) unit during class.

He has never rejected either of these necessities which are a must for a hearing impaired child.

He attended Dimboola Pimpinio Primary School in his early years apart from the latter part where he attended the Horsham 298 Primary School for the last 2 years of Primary education. This occurred due to the setting up of a deaf unit at Horsham 298.

A teacher of the deaf was appointed to the unit.

Andrew's independence and learning had come along remarkably due to the communication between the Parent support group and teachers. This was due to the fact of the teacher of the deaf / visiting teacher taking on like a team leader role; as this person was and still is the only qualified person to come up with answers on how best to handle a certain learning situation concerning my son.

Since Andrew started Secondary College, I have noticed that this role is left more in the hands of the teachers aide, as the visiting teacher does not have the hours to spend with Andrew due to time spent mainly travelling to the allocated schools with a hearing impaired child.

I can't speak highly enough of the support I have received from the Principals, teachers, teachers aides and not forgetting the Teacher of the Deaf, for the education of my child; "But, they can only do so much with the small amount of time allotted to help my son". The time my son has with a Teacher of the deaf is nowhere near enough to what he should be getting to help him being educated. A Teacher of the deaf is a person who has been properly trained, and is a specialist in the needs of education for children who have deafness.

Where I do feel let down, is the Government of the day and the Education Department having a morale responsibility for the duty care of the education of my children.

In other words my son should be entitled to -:

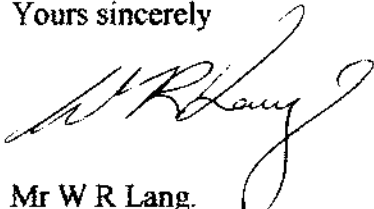
- 1) The same resources as those offered to students in the cities
- 2) More time "one on one" with a qualified teacher of the deaf. (not just a phone link between the teachers aide and the teacher of the deaf)
- 3) Train and employ more teachers of the deaf so as there is **more actual real time** spent with the student.

- 3) cont'; In the country areas most of the visiting teacher time is taken up with travelling to the schools involved.
- 4) I want my son to have the same right as any other child in getting properly educated.
"Proper education means better jobs".
At the moment this is not happening.
- 5) Then education for a child with a hearing disability has gone back.
Compare the services provided to a child taught some 10 years ago; you would find the System has let us down something **BAD**.
- 6) Have a system in place where-by a single separate body controls the education needs for hearing impaired students.
This would allow country hearing impaired students to have equal opportunity to access services.
- 7) Provide a long term solution for the education needs of not only the hearing impaired but to all children with a disability.
Parents are sick and tired of writing letter after letter supporting the right to a better Education for the needs of our children with a disability.
Please don't make just a bandade approach.

I am very pleased that this Government has taken a positive step in addressing the issue of education for children with disabilities. By having a senate inquiry is a start in the right direction.

I only hope that there are positive outcomes from this as all families with hearing impaired students will benefit; especially those who live in the country as there will be the possibility of their child receiving the best education available; thus helping them to fulfill their lifes dreams and ambitions.

Yours sincerely



Mr W R Lang.