

**SENATE FOREIGN AFFAIRS, DEFENCE AND TRADE
REFERENCES COMMITTEE**

**INQUIRY INTO GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TRADE IN
SERVICES AND AUSTRALIA/US FREE TRADE AGREEMENT**

SUBMISSION

Submission No: 104

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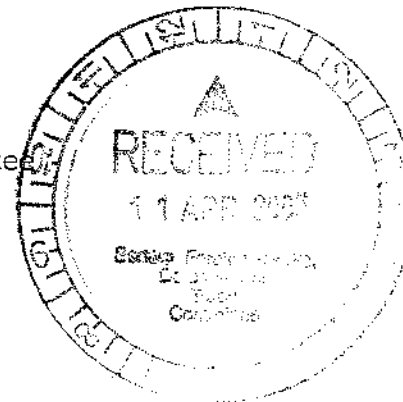
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The Secretary
Senate Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade References Committee
Suite S 1.57
Parliament House
CANBERRA: 2600



SUBMISSION TO SENATE FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
DEFENCE AND TRADE REFERENCES COMMITTEE RE G.A.T.S.

I write to express my concerns about the current negotiations on the General Agreement on Trade in Services.

I am alarmed to learn that this Agreement was entered into in 1994 with so little public debate about the issue.

I am even more concerned that we would be considering including more services in the Agreement.

As a Housing Worker in South Australia I have first hand experience of what privatisation has done to a number of services and utilities - particularly electricity, water and telecommunications. We have experienced a drop in service standards, poor customer relations, increased prices and an alarming lack of accountability to the community. The long-term consequences of this will be previously well-run services falling into disrepair due to a lack of financial input into maintenance and maintaining maintenance standards. The legacy of greedy corporations is one that is impossible to reverse.

G.A.T.S. promises the same problems on a much larger scale and with more far-reaching detrimental affects. The further the administrative structures are removed from the situation the less accountable they see themselves - and unless they are responsible to a Government Minister there is little redress for the people most affected by poor services. This Agreement is about money and the global corporations who would be controlling our services are interested in good returns not good service.

I believe that in a country where the gap between rich and poor is growing to allow more services to be covered by such an Agreement is foolishness and morally wrong. Such an Agreement means that it is a very real possibility that wealth will be drained from this country and even higher numbers of people will be living in Third World conditions.

I oppose absolutely Australia including more services in the G.A.T.S. Agreement.

Yours faithfully

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