

**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: 37

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Submission to Senate Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade
References Committee on the GATS negotiations



After reading and discussing widely, and giving the subject much thought, I am now writing to express my deep concern about the serious implications of the General Agreement on Trade in Services upon the sovereignty of our nation.

Despite reassurances to the contrary in Government booklets and Factsheets, I can see clear dangers in opening up our vital services to tender by transnational corporations or overseas interests, (which, by the way, may mask their overseas connections). Not only will overseas-based corporations have no care for the well-being of Australians because they are only interested in profit-making, but the tendering process will inevitably lead to a lowering of standards of delivery to the Australian people, and put many of our own service providers out of business.

Take the example of privatisation of Energy in Victoria, and of the Melbourne public transport system - these have not resulted in 'increased services and lower prices' from the overseas corporations concerned. Quite the opposite.

Having written to many parliamentarians, I am pleased to find that some are aware of the inherent dangers in the GATS, which appears to be really about the international money system and transnational corporations exploiting every drop of profit from ordinary folk.

Australia must not give up its sovereignty through the GATS. We have led the way on many world issues, and we can now lead the way in not signing up on this agreement, except perhaps in areas fairly and squarely in our national interest.

Our Australian:

Communications, Power, Transport systems, Water,
Quarantine standards and services, Social Services,
Local Government, Customs, Health Care,
Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme, Education,
Australia Post

should all be strictly off-limits to negotiations in the
GATS, because they are essential to our national
security and the well-being of our country.

Finally, I wish to make the point that, in my opinion,
no Parliament with the prosperity and well-being of our
nation truly at heart would allow the General Agreement
on Trade in Services to be signed, except perhaps in a few
limited sectors which will have no adverse effect on
Australia.

Yours very sincerely,

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