

Warren Holland

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Committee Secretary
Senate Finance and Public Administration Committee
Department of the Senate
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
Australia

Dear Committee Secretary

Please accept this as my submission to your Inquiry and Report into the Human Services (Enhanced Services Delivery) Bill 2007 (Access Card Bill).

I have just found a small note in the newspaper regarding the Access Card and the need to make a response by Wednesday 28 February.

This is a response from the "common person", written quickly in order to meet the short deadline, but with a concern for a significant change in Australia which due to the lack of opportunity for debate and discussion gives the air of a secret agenda.

Unfortunately, my response centres on my too many questions. The distinct lack of comprehensive information and the gaps in the systems for what I do know about the card, leave me to question why I do not know much about this important change in Australia.

My response centres on concern for the following:

Business Case

There is no business case for an Access Card that I have been able to find.

What are the declared problems with the current systems?

What alternatives have been considered?

What other uses are envisaged for the card?

Due process

There seems to be a lack of due process that I expect from a business and government

- I have read no information as to the size of the "problem" a national register is meant to solve
- There has been no enquiry into alternate "solutions"
- There has been no parliamentary discussion on whether anti-fraud measures requires a national register
- Planning for the legislation is not comprehensive - "put a bit in here and tidy up later" is a most surprising

approach for professionals who are meant to represent the people of Australia;

- There seems to be a large planned expenditure for a "solution" with dubious outcomes - \$1.1b cost to make \$1.6 savings over 10 years. The money could be more profitably spent on our water problems or on climate change initiatives. These are far more urgent and ultimately devastating real problems for Australians and find a cheaper more effective solution for the fraud problem.
- What occurs if the costs rise above the projected \$1.1b to develop and implement;
- What is the recurrent cost to maintain and **secure** the data
- There is no clear government role in supervising the card data as is "at the whim of the minister or secretary"

Card and Data Security

There are no details of how the system is to be secured. This should be part of the original process, as how can individuals have trust in a new system if there is no thought to its security. Technology systems are not inherently secure and effort is required to secure them and to maintain this security. How will this be undertaken?

Basically:

How will the data be secured?

What occurs if the card is stolen?

How is the stolen cards data protected?

Is there recurrent expenditure allocated for the security of the data?

Is there recurrent expenditure allocated for the ongoing improvement in security of the data?

How is the data protected between data collection - data approval - data input - data card issuer? With such a long chain, this will require stringent security and policy. How will this be undertaken?

Registration

I personally object to having to register for such a card.

Current systems work well.

What are the declared problems with the current systems?

Lack of information and the timing over the Christmas break make me very suspicious of such a card. There is a lack of coherent and comprehensive information to read and to understand this legislation. It has the air of secrecy. Why? Why the haste? What are the benefits of such a card? How will this improve living in Australia?

Thankyou for reading my submission.

Regards

Warren Holland