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Residents & Ratepayers Progress Assoc. Incorporated

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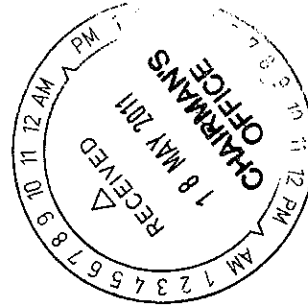
Contact: The Secretary,
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Phone: (08) 8566 3246

Patron: Mr Ross Vogt

12th May, 2011

The Chairman
Mr Gary Banks, AO
Productivity Commission
GPO Box 1428
Canberra City ACT 2601



Regarding the recent enquiry on Caring for Older Australians

Dear Mr Banks,

Following on from our submission to the Productivity Commission 19/3/11, regarding the Enquiry into Aged Care, we have become aware of an aspect that raises grave concerns for us. As we were not aware when we made our submission, that abolition of Mandatory Reporting of Elder Abuse was being suggested by the Commission, we are writing to express these deep concerns.

It was an article in the April 2011 edition of "The Senior News" and comments by Lillian Jeter from the "Elder Abuse Prevention Association" that there are recommendations by the Productivity Commission, to abandon mandatory reporting of elder abuse, which alerted us to this possibility.

We strongly believe that such reporting must continue and perhaps be widened, to include psychological abuse, such as recently occurred in a Homes setting – where photo's of residents genitals were circulated as part of a guessing game!

Our frail elderly deserve protection and if care is increasingly to be given within the home, it is important that reporting continues. One only need watch TV to be reminded that adult children and spouses don't always provide care, as they should. Indeed family carers who are expected to shoulder the major care of their loved ones in their homes, may face huge stresses and find the task is outside their ability. They too may need assistance, or the rise in mental health expenditure may possibly exceed the savings in the aged sector.

We pose the question, "Who will monitor and ensure the safety and wellbeing of the frail and ill or those coping with dementia?" Surely it will be the outside doctors and professionals who provide services, who will recognise all is not well? Mandatory Reporting is essential to ensure in years to come, we do not have scandalous revelations of neglect or abuse of our elderly.

Turning the Light on to Community Issues

With recent revelations of what happened in the past to vulnerable young people, in all forms of care, the Government will face huge claims if they allow it to happen again, this time to the aged – as it is a very obvious risk.

We therefore respectfully request, that Mandatory Reporting be established as a cornerstone of any changes within the sector and hope it is within your mandate to bring this matter forward.

Yours truly,

MRS. JAN HARMAN
For the Committee,
Light Residents and Ratepayers Progress Association Inc.

Per E-Mail

CC Local Members of Parliament
Patron
Members