

**Scarlett, Cheryl (REPS)**

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**From:** daniel hewlett  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 2 July 2003 8:31 PM  
**To:** Committee, EWR (REPS)  
**Subject:** Fwd: social security Reform submission.

**EMP Inquiry  
Submission No. 19**

>From: "daniel hewlett"  
>To:  
>Subject: social security Reform submission.  
>Date: Wed, 16 Apr 2003 02:23:54 +0000

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>Hello, this is Daniel Hewlett writing to you with some of my  
>experiences

>being long term unemployed in the Northern River's region of Ballina.  
>Unemployment has taken its toll on my life in many ways, economically,  
>socially, emotionally, physically. Currently I'm studying certificate IV in  
>Community Services (welfare) at TAFE in Wollongbar part time. As this is  
>only part time and I'm on a NewStart allowance this activity is not approved  
>by Centerlink. I must still look for full time work which personally I  
>don't have an issue with but the employment agency believes I can not  
>find employers to be flexible with my training so if they found me full  
>time work I would have to forgo my training as there is no full time  
>training in this field anywhere else in this region. But there is a big  
>downside to this as the resources out in the community to help me find  
>full time work is greatly lacking. When I apply for a suitable job, I must  
>apply through an employment agency and submit a copy of my resume for the  
>job. But under the privacy laws now in place I'm not allowed to ask who the  
>employer is or attempt to make personal contact with the employer with the  
>help of the employment agency so it is a game of wait and see. When doors  
>knocking employers tend to be non-interested and say we will ring you if  
>something comes up but never do. One employer even asked for my age which  
>shows that employers would rather spend next to nothing on hiring staff  
>so young people get most work opportunities in this area. Sadly there are  
>very few opportunities for me to do a traineeship as these programs are aimed  
>at juniors, so I tend to miss out. I have been unemployed for well over two  
>years now and it seems to drag on which really takes its toll on me. Last  
>year I decided to do some voluntary work for a community organization  
>called Harmony House from March until the end of last year as well I did some  
>training as an assistant in nursing to increase my chances of employment.  
>Sadly in October I had a knee injury which put a stop to my effort to  
>complete my training and volunteer work, and also a chance to obtain work  
>in the aged care industry. With this injury I needed surgery so I went  
>through with it to remove cartilage in my right knee. Then Centerlink came  
>along and wanted me to work for the Dole while I was still recovering from  
>my injury. They never considered that fact that I was still recovering from  
>my injury even though they were advised not to by my doctors. I declined  
>their offer on the grounds that I had on a number of occasions told  
>Centerlink of my voluntary work and training but they rejected my  
>statements and even went to the point of ignoring my injury status which I  
>was still in recovery. They breached me in November 2002 and only recently  
>of April this year they overruled the appeal. I believe that the work  
>for the Dole program is a shame cooked up from the government to escape  
>responsibility for high unemployment. They could have done better by  
>offering a training wage, eg (\$300) for 30 hours a week work, including  
>training on the job to obtain guaranteed work. But all they do is offer  
>\$20 dollars more and to keep people on the Dole which is not helpful for  
>the unemployed. Also what is shocking is the government only contracts work  
>for the Dole programs to non-profit organizations personally that is not  
>creating long term employment opportunities but more long term  
>unemployment. It is sadly true people are better off not being in  
>relationships if they are unemployed or only one is working and the other

>is looking for work or in study. As I personally have experienced this  
>outcome. For about 6 months i lived with my partner which was a financial  
>nightmare for both of us. Before we were living together she was better of  
>as she as a single mother, as she was entitled to more money from  
>Centrelink. But when we moved in together the story changed and she had  
>less money as we were treated as a couple, meaning we both had to survive  
>on one income. So Centrelink reduced her payments as well as mine and I  
>had to declare her earnings from her casual job to Centerlink which in turn  
>reduced my income from centerlink, so in all i had no choice but to give my  
>partner less money. So I went from living on \$400 a fortnight to \$257 a  
>fortnight. When we split up well what do you know she got more money and  
>so did i. It rose back up to \$400 a fortnight but personally i believe in  
>my heart working was the better option but when Employment Agencies put up  
>barries, including employeers its a up hill battle Its very much like  
>hitting your head against a brick wall. What really upsets me is I live in  
>a society where families are encouraged to split up unless they both work  
>and the unemployed them selves are blamed for there joblessness. Personaly  
>i would like to see positive changes to the system encourging families to  
>stay together and more support for the unemployed and more work opotunties  
>not less and people should not be punished for there suitation but rewarded  
>and encourged through incentives. Also there should be insentives for  
>people staying together. I'm willing to address this issue personaly, if  
>needed by adressing this issue directly to the government in person.

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>To contact me for further information please write to me vi my email  
>address or phone me.

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>Daniel John Hewlett.

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Daniel John Hewlett.

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