

From: [REDACTED]  
Sent: Thursday, 19 May 2005 11:43 AM  
To: Bishop, Bronwyn (MP)  
Cc: Committee, FHS (REPS)  
Subject: Maternity Allowance

**SUBMISSION NO. 119**  
AUTHORISED: 25.05.05 *Adoption*

Dear Ms Bishop

We welcome the National Inquiry into Adoption of Children from Overseas and believe this is a positive step in uniting families in Children across Australia. We have read many of the submissions and support concerns for inconsistencies across Australia and also the unfairness in regards to biological and adopted children.

While the recent announcement of increasing the age to 2 to enable adopting families to qualify for the \$3000 maternity payment is welcomed, we would just like to point out that there are also many families who miss out.

Our story is very typical. 14 years ago we began our journey to have a family. After several years we turned to IVF. After several years this too was mentally and financially draining. Luckily we turned to adoption and now have 2 beautiful children. We were allocated siblings at 2 1/2 years and 4 1/2 years old. Naturally because of their ages we would not qualify for the maternity allowance. Without allowing for the car seats, beds, clothing, medical problems when we arrived home, loss of my income, and all of the other general expenses that we needed in the 1st 6 months, our adoption cost approximately \$30 000.

Our journey to become parents has cost us in excess of \$50 000 (including IVF). However we believe you can not put a price on our children's faces.

So again we are in the process of adopting. We expect to be allocated a child or children 3 years and/ or over. Again we will miss out on any maternity allowance. While this will not stop us we find it difficult to accept that because our family has been formed in a "non normal" way that our children are not accepted in the same ways that other children in Australia are.

Our children have not been a burden on the Australian tax payer instead they will be wonderful contributors to our society. Again I would like to remind you our story is not an isolated one.

Please help to abolish the age restriction for these maternity payments. Many families would be grateful for this assistance. Please remember that these families and children have been through so much already and are just as worthy as those who are now currently receiving this allowance.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]  
Parents of a 9 yo Daughter  
and 7 yo son  
Adopted at 2 1/2 and 4 1/2 in 2000