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From: Committee (REPS)
Sent: Monday, 9 October 2006 8:47 AM
To: Committee, FHS (REPS)
Subject: FW: To the Committe Reviewing Child Care Rebate Processing

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Dear Committee

We believe the system that has been put in place for processing of the Government Child Care Rebate System is excellent and the ATO tax agent portal support for this new initiative is working very well.

Any criticism of the systems is unfounded.

In this instance the Govt made announcements of its policy well in advance which enable us to prepare for implementation and it gave the ATO time to prepare also.

All clients for whom we have lodged claims have been more than happy with the system and grateful of the additional assistance. The data reported has been very accurate.

Some people grumble about the time delay but when we explain to them that it is necessary in order to allow time for dataflow through the system clients understand.

Of course we have a vested interest in the Government outsourcing such benefit processing to us as tax agents however we firmly believe that we are best placed to provide these services, we are efficient and cost effective, we are not a drain on the public purse and only those receiving the benefits incur a cost for processing rather than that costs having to be further subsidised. We are also best placed to ensure that services are tailored to the needs of the individual Tax-payer. In effect the Government gets an army of skilled professionals performing tasks for it without any outlays and on a user pays basis - it is a win for everybody concerned except of course those who believe in an expanded public service.

We believe an expanded public service to provide such services is unwarranted, while we believe the public service for the most part do an admirable job we maintain that they have no ownership in the outcome. Accountants in private public practice are accountable for outcomes even if those outcomes are a Govt initiatives over which the Accountant has no control, because clients dissatisfaction is generally levelled at the Accountant as messenger. As a consequence of Accountants heightened sensitivity to dealing with clients feelings in these matters and our desire to retain customers we firmly believe this results in superior outcomes.

Outsourcing such processing to private public accounting practices also helps to keep the costs down overall in the administration of the tax system because there are thousand of practitioners competing for this work in the market place.

Thank you for consideration of our submission.

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