

UNFAIR FUNDING OF CHILDREN'S CARE

TO THE HONOURABLE THE SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

This petition of certain citizens of Australia draws to the attention of the House our strong opposition to proposals unfairly discriminating against mothers who care for their own children, eg –

1. The Productivity Commission's proposal in its draft Report (30/9/08) to pay eligible working mothers 18 weeks maternity leave in a package costing taxpayers \$450 million per annum.
2. The Government's commitment to build 260 childcare centres by 2014, the first 38 centres costed at \$114.5 million in the 2008 Budget.

Both proposals ignore international research showing the high risk of future behavioural problems and insecure attachment particularly in children aged under 2 years left in daycare (even high quality care) for more than 20 hours a week.

The Commonwealth Government should not use taxpayers' money to encourage mothers to leave young babies and older siblings in childcare institutions or other non-parental care to rejoin the paid workforce.

Instead, the Government should recompense mothers who give up a whole salary for several years to love, bond with and care for their children from infancy, thus lowering their child's risk of insecure attachment which can lead to depression and poor mental health, disruptive/uncooperative behaviour in school and poor job prospects with lower productivity.

We therefore ask the House to:

- (a) reject paid parental leave;
- (b) reverse the decision to build extra childcare centres;
- (c) implement policies promoting parental nurturing of Australian children over all other care;
- (d) retain and improve appropriate support for the parenting role of sole and at-risk parents.