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NDIS | Revolutionising disability services

Canberra, ACT, 28th February, 2011

DISABILITY REFORM STEP CLOSER WITH RELEASE OF PRODUCTIVITY COMMISSION REPORT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Every Australian Counts campaign for a National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) today welcomed the release of the Productivity Commission's draft report into Disability Care and Support.

Every Australian Counts National Campaign Director, Mr John Della Bosca, said people with a disability, their families and carers, and the organisations that support them have been eagerly awaiting this first look at the Commission's findings after its year-long inquiry.

"This inquiry has generated an unprecedented community response. No other Productivity Commission inquiry – from water reform to Indigenous disadvantage to immigration to paid parental leave – has received as much public interest or as many submissions," Mr Della Bosca said.

"Australians with a disability, their families and carers have been waiting decades for genuine change. They expect this inquiry will finally provide the Government with a blueprint for reform.

"The Productivity Commission has made it clear from the beginning that inaction is not an option – they have recognised that the system is so underfunded, crisis driven and uncoordinated that the only way to improve the lives of people with a disability, their families and carers is to fundamentally overhaul the entire system.

"They have recognised that the time for tinkering at the edges has passed. We look forward to examining the report in greater detail to see what they have proposed as a solution."

Mr Della Bosca said all three major parties – Labor, Coalition and Greens - expressed in-principle support for the NDIS at the last federal election and committed to taking the Productivity Commission findings "very seriously".

"We are very pleased that all the major parties have decided to put politics aside in the interests not only of people with a disability, their families and carers, but in the social and economic interests of the nation," he said.

"This nation needs an NDIS because enabling people with a disability, their families and carers to participate in the economic and social life of the nation will not only ensure they have access to the same kinds of opportunities the rest of Australia takes for granted but will deliver substantial financial and social benefits to the community as a whole.

"Productivity and workforce participation are two challenges facing the nation. By giving people the support they need the NDIS will unlock the potential of the many Australians with a disability who are willing and able to work but who are currently locked out of the workplace. The economic benefits for the country are compelling.

"When the final report is handed down in July the time will come for action. We are looking forward to all the major parties working together to deliver and implement the kind of revolutionary change that people with a disability, their families and carers want and deserve."

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