

14 February 2020

Committee Secretary  
Senate Standing Committees on Community Affairs  
PO Box 6100  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Committee Secretary

**Letter of Endorsement: National Social Security Rights Network Submission in relation to the Social Services and Other Legislation Amendment (Simplifying Income Reporting and Other Measures) Bill 2020**

The Accountable Income Management Network (AIMN) is pleased to endorse the submission of the National Social Security Rights Network (NSSRN) to the Committees.

The AIMN is a network of community members, representatives of non-government organisations and community bodies, academics, social researchers and public policy experts concerned with the rights of people receiving social security payments- particularly those subject to compulsory income management programs. We greatly appreciate the NSSRN's ongoing work to produce evidence-based commentary and resources on social security legislation and its implementation.

The AIMN reiterates the recommendations put forward by the NSSRN in their submission to the Committee, which are in relation to: the need for further consultation with people affected; the allocation of sufficient time and resources to ensure effective communication with people affected; the provision of sufficient support to people affected, and; giving consideration to the proposal that reporting obligations should primarily fall onto the government, rather than people receiving social security payments.

We would also like to raise the following two additional concerns for the Committee's consideration:

- There has been insufficient attention to the potential erosion of individual privacy and data rights/sovereignty in relation to the data-sharing mechanisms proposed by the Bill. This includes, but is not limited to, ethical questions about data linkage, access to personal information by private contractors hired by Services Australia, and the generation of data profiles of social security recipients (and the ethicality, necessity and accuracy of such profiles).
- The time-frame provided for the community sector to consider and respond to- and for Senators to report on- the suitability of this Bill is unreasonable. A turn-around of 6 business days does not provide nearly enough time for a detailed analysis of the social and economic implications of this piece of legislation and cannot be considered to be consultation in good faith with key stakeholders.

We strongly encourage the Committee to carefully consider both the recommendations put forward by the NSSRN in their submission, and our additional concerns raised here.

Yours Sincerely,

Priya Kunjan  
Secretariat  
Accountable Income Management Network