

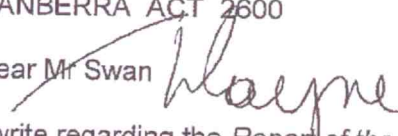


John Della Bosca MLC  
Minister for Health  
Minister for the Central Coast  
Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council

P09\238

The Hon Wayne Swan MP  
Federal Treasurer  
PO Box 6022  
House of Representatives  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Mr Swan

  
I write regarding the *Report of the NSW Legislative Council General Purpose Standing Committee Inquiry into the Program of Appliances for Disabled People (PADP)*, which was released on 15 December 2008. A copy of the report is enclosed for your reference.

In particular, I wish to draw your attention to Recommendation 5 of the report that "*the NSW Minister for Health initiate discussions with the Federal Treasurer regarding ways to increase tax relief for the costs associated with a disability*". This recommendation appears to be based on several submissions to the Inquiry from people with disability and their families (refer to pages 21-23).

I understand that the Australian Government provides tax relief for costs associated with a disability under several of its existing programs. For example, I am aware that the Australian Taxation Office has introduced measures whereby certain medical aids and appliances can be supplied GST-free, and that under the Department of Veterans' Affairs Rehabilitation Aids Program tax rebates are available on the cost of car modifications for approved applicants.

However, the present arrangements for tax relief for the costs associated with disability appear to be somewhat fragmented, especially having regard to the variety of equipment programs and subsidies provided by the States and Territories, as well as by Non-Government Organisations. There may be potential benefits in exploring a more coordinated, national approach to this issue, in conjunction with other work related to programs and services for people with disability.

The NSW Government is interested in exploring further options to increase tax relief for the costs associated with disability. Your advice on how this issue might be progressed at the Federal level would be appreciated.

Yours sincerely

  
John Della Bosca MLC

Cc: The Hon Bill Shorten MP  
Parliamentary Secretary for Disabilities and Children's Services