

**MEDIA RELEASE**  
14 February 2007

## **PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY DISREGARDED!**

### **Howard Government Ignores Senate Disability Report**

The Howard Government has completely ignored a unanimous bipartisan report of the Senate Community Affairs Committee into the Funding and Operation of the Commonwealth State/Territory Disability Agreement which calls upon all governments - Commonwealth, State and Territory - to provide **substantial additional funding for much needed basic support services for people with disability across Australia.**

The Senate Report unanimously highlights that government performance at all levels has been unacceptable. The Howard Government's own Senators have acknowledged the severely compromised quality of life of Australians with disability. Liberal Senator Gary Humphries, Chair of the Senate Community Affairs Committee, comments that those affected by disability rank as one of the most disadvantaged groups of Australians today. Former Minister for Family and Community Services, Senator Kay Patterson, includes the Howard Government in her pleas for a response to this embarrassing state of affairs.

Instead, the Howard Government has stated that it will not provide any additional money towards these much needed support services for people with disability. The Howard Government has not only denied this additional funding, it has also threatened to walk away from the agreement which provides for people with disability. They continue, instead, to blame State and Territory Governments for the unacceptable state of disability services across Australia.

**"This blatant disregard for Australian citizens with disability by the Howard Government is completely unacceptable. The time for political wrangling is over. Inaction is no longer an option",** says National CSTDA Community Alliance spokesperson, Co-Convenor Su-Hsien Lee, "The responsibility to resolve this issue lies with the Commonwealth, State and Territory governments. All must work in partnership to meet the needs of people with disability and their families."

People with disability, their families, advocates and the Australian community ask the Howard Government:

- Why have you ignored such a critical Senate Report?
- Why have you ignored the recommendations of your own Senators?
- Why are you turning your back on the rights and needs of Australian citizens with disability?

*Enquiries Su-Hsien Lee, Co-Convenor National CSTDA Community Alliance 9420 7203, Mobile 0411 754 402  
c/- Developmental Disability Council of WA, City West Lotteries House, 2 Delhi Street, West Perth WA 6005.*