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Thursday, August 30, 2012

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

Dear Secretary,

Re: Inquiry into Bill to establish the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC)

FamilyCare has been an interested observer and regular contributor to consultations regarding the establishment of the ACNC. A recurrent issue in these communications has been the adequacy of the time available to consider important, detailed and complex material relating to the Commission's structure and roles. FamilyCare has been unable to keep pace. It has nothing to do with a lack of will or interest. The timelines have simply become increasingly unworkable.

The referral to the Committee of the current Inquiry was, as we understand it, made on 23 August – last Thursday. We became aware of the Inquiry today – seven days later, the same day that submissions are due. As a result, FamilyCare is unable to make substantive comment.

FamilyCare is broadly supportive of the ACNC's development. It represents a once in a generation opportunity to develop more effective, relevant oversight of the NFP sector. The people who have been appointed or recruited to the new Commission appear to us to be very talented, informed and experienced. They will no doubt be of great assistance to all levels of government and the sector being regulated in the transition to the new regulatory environment.

The process and timelines however are undermining the potential for good outcomes in a most fundamental way. That is the only message we are able to put to the Committee in the time available – but we think it is an important one to deliver.

Yours Sincerely

David Tennant
Chief Executive Officer