*NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS PARTY (EQUAL PARENTING)*

John Flanagan
Deputy Registered Officer,
*Non-Custodial Parents Party (Equal Parenting),*
13 March 2009.

Committee Secretary,
Senate Select Committee on Men's Health,
PO Box 6100,
Parliament House.
CANBERRA. ACT 2600
Australia

Dear Sir/Madam

**Re. Submission on Men's Health.**

We thank the Senate Select Committee on Men's Health for providing us with the opportunity to make a submission.

**1. <u>Office for the Status of Men and Fathers</u>.**

There is a need to provide a focal point for any government initiative with regard to men's health and well-being.

Therefore we need an **Office for the Status of Men and Fathers**.

**2. <u>Why is there a Need?</u>**

Men are getting sicker earlier than women. Men are dying at a younger age.

One obvious reason is that we do not have a government agency that is specifically concerned with the important and significant issue of men's health.

**3. <u>Specific Family Law and Child Support Issues</u>**

Our political party, the *Non-Custodial Parents Party (Equal Parenting),* is specifically concerned with family law and child support issues. We put up candidates at the Federal Elections (2001, 2004 and 2007). This is because the major political parties do not cover the issues that we stand for.

Family law and child support legislation is designed so that separated parents are not to be a cost to the Government.

For example, the Child Support Agency costs about $500 million to run each year. The CSA trumpet that they are self-funded. As such the CSA says they are therefore not a cost to the Government.

Yes, it is true that the CSA is self-funded. However where do the funds come from to run this organization? And is there, in reality no cost to the Government?

The answers are simple.

**a. Funding of the Child Support Agency**

Firstly, where do the funds come from?

These funds come from the money that Centrelink rips off from the custodial parents. A levy of 50 cents for each child support dollar paid is made on family tax benefits that should be fully paid to custodial parents. The funds are then transferred to the coffers of the CSA so that they can be used for their running expenses.

**b. Results achieved by the Child Support Agency**

Secondly, what has the Child Support Agency achieved and is there, in reality, no cost to the Government?

Currently, the CSA has forced 42 per cent of non-custodial parents into unemployment (320,000 people) – mainly fathers.

It is well established that unemployment is one of the main causes of mental and physical health issues.

The CSA are one of the main causes of unemployment and as a result one of the main causes of mental and physical health problems for men (and women) in Australia.

The approach by organisations such as the CSA does cause a significant overall cost to the Government.

**4. Summary**

We need a specialist organization, such as an **Office for the Status of Men and Fathers**, to turn this and other incredibly poor men's health results around.

Thanking you

Yours faithfully

**John Flanagan,**
Deputy Registered Officer,
*Non-Custodial Parents Party (Equal Parenting,*
http://www.ncpp.xisle.info