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No simple answers for complex lives

Anglicare Australia's submission to the Senate Community Affairs Committee Inquiry into the proposed changes to the Social Security Act, now available on the Committee's website [[here](#)], calls for the Government to step back from its blanket approach to compulsory income management.

"Anglicare agencies work with one in 40 Australians. One of the lessons we've learnt from that work is that providing individual support to people when they need it can help them get their lives on track" Anglicare Australia's Executive Director Kasy Chambers said today.

"We've also learnt that people doing it tough most value having their voice heard when decisions are being made that directly affect them. Unfortunately, that is not the approach that Government is taking with this legislation."

"In its Principles of Social Inclusion, the Australian Government aims to give people a greater voice along with greater responsibility. But this proposed amendment of the Social Security Act gives no voice. It automatically assumes that whole classes of people who live on benefits can't manage, or aren't contributing, to our society; and makes them subject to income management."

"These Principles also promise an approach that builds on individual and community strengths, works in partnership with key stakeholders, is based on evidence, and gets different parts of government to work together in new and flexible ways. The decision to push through compulsory income management, without – necessarily – any other measures of support, flies in the face of that approach."

"There are two things we need government to do for people on the margins of our society: make sure they get enough to live on, and invest in the kind of flexible wrap-around services that they need if they are going to turn their lives around."

"Income management might be useful as a part of such a plan: but only in response to individual circumstances."

"Anglicare Australia is concerned that the blanket stand alone approach to income management of this Bill will work against the commitment that we share with the Government – which is to build on the strengths of the people in our society, and to work in partnership with them and with their communities" Ms Chambers said.

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THE VOICE FOR ANGLICAN CARE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE IN AUSTRALIA

This statement represents the views of Anglicare Australia, as the national peak body of the Anglicare network.
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