

MEDIA RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SENATE REPORT LEAVES CRITICAL NDIS REFORM RISKS UNRESOLVED

Australian Autism Alliance says reform cannot rely on promises of safety where readiness, safeguards and accountability have not been demonstrated

The Australian Autism Alliance is deeply troubled that, after six days of hearings and thousands of submissions raising concerns about evidence, readiness, safeguards and potential harm, the Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee has recommended that the NDIS Amendment Bill 2026 be passed.

The Alliance supports NDIS reform, sustainability and strong action against fraud, exploitation and waste.

But reform must not leave people with disability worse off.

The Committee's recommendation leaves a fundamental question for Parliament:

Has Government demonstrated that these reforms are sufficiently evidenced, ready, safeguarded and accountable to justify proceeding?

The Alliance's evidence to the Inquiry identified unresolved risks relating to functional assessment, family capacity, implementation sequencing, alternative-system readiness, safeguards and accountability.

It also proposed practical solutions — including stronger readiness and accountability requirements, protections against gaps in support, alternative efficiencies and savings, and whole-of-government assessment of whether NDIS savings simply shift costs to families, health, education, housing, justice and other systems.

Australian Autism Alliance Co-Chair Jenny Karavolos said the debate should not be reduced to a choice between reform and no reform.

“People with disability have repeatedly said they support reform, sustainability and action against fraud and exploitation. They are asking for reform that is safe, evidence-based and does not make their lives worse.”

“A commencement date is not a readiness test. A promise of safety is not an enforceable safeguard. And a saving to the NDIS is not necessarily a saving to Australia.”

The Alliance remains particularly concerned about changes to participant supports and eligibility proceeding before the systems people will be expected to rely upon have been demonstrated to be accessible, sufficient and effective.

Where reform depends on another system being available, implementation risk should sit with Government — not with the person with disability.

What happens next

The Alliance will now apply its **Systems That Work** methodology to assess the reforms as they move toward implementation.

This will form part of the developing **Systems That Work for Everyone** initiative:

Designed to work. Built to safeguard. Measured by outcomes.

The Alliance will assess **Readiness | Accountability | Safeguards | Savings | Evidence | Outcomes** and publish both its findings and practical applications showing what safer, accountable implementation should look like.

“People with disability have participated in this process in good faith and shared deeply personal experiences, evidence and solutions,” Ms Karavolos said.

“Parliament now has a responsibility to ensure reform does not become another roll of the dice for the people whose lives depend upon these systems.”

NDIS reform must leave people better off.

If systems are not ready, reform is not ready.

About the Australian Autism Alliance: We are the national peak body furthering the rights and interests of Autistic people across the life span, their parents and carers, and the autism community in Australia. The members represent a cohesive national network of key organisations with a diverse focus on autism. For more information about Australian Autism Alliance go to: australianautismalliance.org.au and connect with us on LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter.

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