



NSW Disability Advocacy Alliance

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NSW Govt ignores inquiry recommendation that it reverse plans to axe disability advocacy funding

The NSW Government has refused to back down on its plans to axe funding for disability advocacy, today all but ignoring a key parliamentary inquiry recommendation that says that funding for advocacy is crucial for people with disability.

In its response to the recent inquiry into the implementation of the NDIS, the NSW Government simply stated that it 'noted' the recommendation that it continue to provide vital funding for disability advocacy, information and representation organisations past 2020.

Stand by Me campaign spokesperson and CEO of the Physical Disability Council NSW, Serena Ovens, said the timing of the NSW Government's response – just as everyone heads off on their Christmas break - and the seemingly deliberate avoidance of the recommendation to continue to fund advocacy shows a lack of respect for people with disability.

"The NSW Government had an opportunity to provide people with a disability with the Christmas gift of knowing disability advocacy funding is going to be secure into the future, but instead the Disability Minister has decided to play Grinch and refuse to guarantee a future for these vital services," Ms Ovens said.

"There are millions of people with a disability in NSW now heading off to Christmas incredibly worried that the vital services they rely on to ensure their voices are heard are still on the chopping block.

"The Disability Minister's quiet avoidance of the recommendation that funding for disability advocacy continue is a worrying sign that he is intent on ignoring the cries of people with a disability and cutting these services off.

"People with disability rely on these services to make sure we're getting a fair deal - whether it's advocating for improved access on public transport, protecting workplace rights, dealing with horrific cases of abuse, exploitation or discrimination, or helping navigate the NDIS.

"The NSW Government's own inquiry into the NDIS found that funding for these services is crucial, yet the Disability Minister is refusing to acknowledge the need for it.

"This government is fast running out of time to reverse its horrific decision to axe funding for disability advocacy, information and representation organisations.

"Funding the services that provide people with disability with vital support isn't just the right thing to do, it also makes economic sense. The NSW Government owes the people of NSW an explanation as to why it is refusing to commit to ongoing funding that would allow these disability organisations to stay open."

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The Stand by Me campaign is run by a coalition of 22 disability advocacy, information and representation organisations in NSW. For more information go to www.standbyme.org.au