



"MEDIA RELEASE"
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SHORTEN PROMOTED

But Jan will more than fill the bill!

The Gillard Government is quickly spreading the message that they remain fully committed to the disability cause, but Bill Shorten will be sadly missed from his pivotal hands on role.

We have attached a message from Bill that was circulated on the weekend.

As you will see, notwithstanding Bill's appointment as Assistant Treasurer and Minister for Financial Services and Superannuation, (A well deserved and not unexpected promotion) Bill remains passionate about advocating for better life outcomes for people with disability and their carers.

There are many in the disability community who feel the needs of people with disability, families and carers was ignited by a personal campaign of Kevin Rudd's who by appointing a genuine fresh talent in Shorten to the Disability portfolio turbo charged the debate and ensured Disability Unmet Need emerged from the shadows.

Many will hope that Julia Gillard has the same priority and intent as her predecessor. Julia's pre election comments on NDIS were a touch disappointing and lacking the passion of Shorten and Rudd particularly when combined with the lethargic ALP 2010 pre election commitments that totalled just \$160 million some 80% less than 2007. Julia spoke more passionately on mental health and aged care which we all know are decidedly more populous vote winners than the disability crisis and they have now been included as an enhanced Ministry. Disappointingly Disability was not given Ministerial status as many had hoped for. !

Gillard has however gone for experience in the tried and trusted appointment of Senator Jan McLucas as the new Parliamentary Secretary for Disability.

Senator McLucas is highly knowledgeable and has vast experience in disability,

having served as Shadow Minister for Ageing and Disabilities from October 2004 to June 2005; and as Shadow Minister for Ageing, Disabilities and Carers from June 2005 until December 2007. Senator McLucas was responsible for drafting much of the ALP's 2007 election policy (an excellent policy!) in relation to disability and carers which formed the basis of the 2007 Labor Government's significant reform and achievements in the portfolio during its first term. As such, while the disability sector should be confident that Senator McLucas does possess an extensive understanding and appreciation of disability in Australia many will look for an update on how she personally perceives the new era of choice and change that is permeating the disability community and allowing consumers to choose who and where they live, what services they want, how they should be delivered and who controls them. Senator McLucas is contactable at senator.mclucas@aph.gov.au and would no doubt welcome your questions.

There is also no doubt Bill remains strongly committed to advocating for people with disability both inside and outside of Government. His often repeated comments that Australia has a basic health care program (Medicare), a basic wage, a basic superannuation scheme, an strong social security program and the remaining hole in community protection is disability support will no doubt resonate in cabinet from his new and stronger position. Bill's appointment to the Ministry should be viewed as an opportunity to broaden the disability debate across Government and continue the significant momentum that Bill worked hard to bring to the disability portfolio during the Labor Government's first term.

We all look forward to working with Jan to get the big job done. There is never a more important time that the disability community bands together and carries the message outside our own peers to the wider community. The implementation on NDIS may well depend on this message being broadcast publicly and no longer internally.

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