



# 'Common sense missing?'

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Nothing would make me happier than to give my mate Adam a real job.

He is a great guy, with a disability and I love him. Sadly I don't live in fantasy world. Fantasy remains a wonderful thing and distracts many of us through periods of boredom

Last week in fantasy world we were shutting community houses so people can live who knows where? This week we are applauding the potential destruction of treasured jobs for people with disability.

The Senate's rejection of the Business Services Wage Assessment Tool (BSWAT) is a disaster in the making. Thousands of people with disability may lose their jobs from Australian Disability Enterprises (ADEs) that will struggle to survive. These people will be the most challenged, the ones with the greatest need and for many their job at ADE's was much more about establishing meaningful social networks and friendships than being productive to the national economy. Many of them will be people with high level intellectual disability.

The 20,000 Australians living with disability currently working in sheltered workshops have been hung out to dry (again) by ideologists that purport to represent their best interests. The consequential shrinking of the Australian Disability Enterprise model will be a huge risk to many.

**Until there is a viable alternative to replacing the ADE model with a more effective mechanism the ADE model should have been protected and maintained. No such alternative model currently exists that is proven.**

To risk the self-esteem of so many by making them the collateral road kill of ideological zealots is truly disturbing.

As an employer of some 700 people the harsh reality is that I am unable to employ some very good friends with disability in the commercial world as much as I wish too. While I can for some others miss out. With over 800,000 on the Disability Support Pension these 20,000 additional people with disability are guaranteed to find the work market less than embracing.

Not everyone will be lucky enough to move from the DSP to the Senate (but that's another story is it not?)

Given both the Federal and State Governments who are Australia's largest employers have failed to generate meaningful employment for people with disability to assume private employers would rise to this challenge without significant support is simply stupidity.

Once again people with disability are having their options and choices diluted by well-meaning but illogical zealots.

I hope Adam does not lose his ADE job; that would be a disaster.

The biggest shame is that once again politicians are not listening to the broader community of disability service users and delivering real options and choices.

The lack of common sense in this decision is very concerning.

### **David Holst**

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