

NEWS RELEASE

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INTERNATIONAL DAY OF OLDER PERSONS

COTA Australia (Council on the Ageing), Australia's peak body of older Australians, has congratulated the Gillard Government on the prompt introduction of legalisation for a full time Age Discrimination Commissioner.

It has also urged the Government to use tomorrow's International Day of Older Persons (October 1) to recommit itself to major reforms to Australia's aged care system.

Mr Ian Yates, COTA's Chief Executive, said the Age Discrimination Commissioner was an election commitment and early action on its implementation was warmly welcomed. He called on all political parties and the Independents to support the legislation.

Mr Yates said the Prime Minister had committed to aged care reform as a high priority in the election campaign, but this had not been specifically mentioned by the Governor General when she formally opened Parliament this week.

"The International Day of Older Persons is an ideal opportunity for the Government to re-confirm its commitment to a timetable for reform after the Productivity Commission reports early next year", Ian Yates said.

Mr Yates said Australia needs a system that:

- provides older people with support and care, primarily at home and in community
- gives older Australians a guaranteed and automatic entitlement to care
- provides choice and control over what support older people receive, when and how.
- has simple gateways into the system

"COTA has welcomed the appointment of Mark Butler MP as Minister for Ageing - he sought this portfolio and has a long term interest in and passion for aged care," he said.

"Now it is time for the Government to commit to a new Age Care Act during 2011 supported by significant Budget initiatives in aged care.

"Aged care has been left on the political shelf for too long and older Australians will be demanding that the Federal Government live-up to its pre-election commitments.

"They will also be expecting the bi-partisan support of the Opposition and Independents.

"Australia must make some key decisions in the coming year, given that the number of older Australians will really balloon out in the next three decades."

COTA Australia represents more than 500,000 older Australians.

Further Information:

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