



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Community Services

SPEECH

Wednesday, 27 May 2015

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Date Wednesday, 27 May 2015
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Questioner
Speaker Brodtmann, Gai, MP

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Ms BRODTMANN (Canberra) (13:45): Deputy Speaker, as you know, I have been very vocal in my outrage and disappointment over the cuts made in the Department of Social Services latest funding round. As we know, this year's budget locks in all the unfairness of last year's budget when it comes to cuts to community organisations.

Just days before Christmas last year, community groups right around the country learned their federal funding was being cut. After a huge outcry across Australia, the government announced 'bridging funding' to a number of these organisations. However, that bridging funding did not include the ACT Chinese Aged Care Information and Referral Service, which has had its funding cut and has not been thrown a lifeline. This ACT Chinese-Australian service had been receiving funding from the Australian government to run a broad range of bilingual services to Canberra's aged Chinese population since 2007. It provides a valuable service to the elderly Chinese community here in Canberra in a broad range of areas. I have met with the group, and they are extremely disappointed, as are their clients.

I just do not understand how this government expects this country to tackle issues like ageing, particularly in the CALD community; poverty; homelessness; family violence; and protecting our environment, heritage, and culture without strong communities and strong community organisations. This government should reverse its unfair and short-sighted cuts to these important community services.