



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Federation Chamber

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

**National Information Centre
on Retirement Investments**

SPEECH

Monday, 9 February 2015

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SPEECH

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Questioner
Speaker Neumann, Shayne, MP

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Mr NEUMANN (Blair) (16:14): This morning I met with Wendy Schlig, the CEO of the National Information Centre on Retirement Investments, NICRI—an organisation which had received federal government funding since 1989 to provide consumers with information and financial guidance on superannuation, residential aged care fees and redundancy. This is ironic given that NICRI staff will all be redundant thanks to the unfair decision of this Abbott government.

NICRI has been receiving about \$654,000 a year. It employs people with a technical and financial background. It runs seminars and ensures consumers have the information they need to make appropriate decisions concerning their aged-care needs and retirement issues with confidence. They were so good that the government's aged-care telephone operators often referred people to them to explain aged-care fees. So it came as quite a shock to discover they were no longer being funded.

Just days before Christmas in 2014, Wendy received an email impersonally addressed 'Dear Grant Applicant' which informed her that NICRI was no longer receiving government funding. After 25 years of service with bipartisan support, all they received was a stock standard email. Every attempt to find out why they were no longer being funded has been rebuffed by this government. To date NICRI does not know why they have been defunded, and the government is not likely to inform them any time soon. This government, the Abbott government, wonders why the people of Australia have lost confidence in them.