

Ms Julie McKay and Mr Marcus Beechmore
Government Relations Team
Vision Australia

BY EMAIL: government.relations@visionaustralia.org

Dear Ms McKay and Mr Beechmore

RE: Nick Xenophon Team position on vision impairment policies

Thank you for the opportunity to provide you with the Nick Xenophon Team's position on the following policy proposals by Vision Australia:

Vision Australia calls on you and your party to commit to:

- *Set a new target to reduce the unemployment rate of people with disability to match the general population figure (from 9.4% to approximately 5.7%).*
- *Create a targeted APS internship for people who are blind or have low vision aged 18 to 21, to raise employability and off-set their lack of youth employment opportunities.*
- *Collect, collate and publicly report on the number of people with disability employed in the APS, and disaggregate according to disability type with a dedicated category for blindness and low vision, to track your progress.*

Vision Australia calls on you and your party to support blind and low vision students by:

- *Implementing recommendations outlined in the 2015 Review of the Disability Standards for Education and the Gonski Review, and create an appropriately funded 'student with disability' entitlement to significantly reduce overall costs.*
- *Routinely collect, collate and publicly report on the progress of students with disability in achieving their learning outcomes, disaggregated according to disability type, and in accordance with the Sustainable Development Goals.*

To support seniors who are blind or have low vision we ask you & your party to commit to:

- *Fund specialist blindness providers to supply aids and equipment to seniors living with vision loss, so they remain safe and independent in their own homes for longer.*
- *Implement adequate policy and funding to ensure specialist blindness services can be delivered to Home Care Package holders and residents of nursing homes.*

Vision Australia calls on you and your party to commit to:

- *Amend the Broadcasting Services Act 1992 to mandate a minimum of 14 hours per week of audio described content on all free-to-air and pay TV stations.*
- *Support the ABC to maintain audio description beyond the 2015/16 iView trial.*

Vision Australia calls on you and your party to commit to working with the AEC to introduce an iVote system in time for the next federal election.

The Nick Xenophon Team is pleased to confirm that we support each of the proposals put forward by Vision Australia and will advocate for these changes in Parliament.

You may also be aware that I have recently raised concerns that over 65s who are vision impaired will be locked out of support from the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) due to their age. Please be assured the Nick Xenophon Team will continue to advocate for all vision impaired people to have access to the necessary support through the NDIS, regardless of their age.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact us in relation to these proposals.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nick Xenophon', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

NICK XENOPHON

21 / 6 / 2016