



MEDIA RELEASE

25 JANUARY 2008

FAMILY TAX BENEFIT B IS IMPORTANT TO SOME FAMILIES

Family Relationship Services Australia (FRSA) the national peak body for family relationship services responded cautiously to the proposed changes to Family Tax Benefit B.

Family Tax Benefit Part B replaced the sole parent rebate when the GST was introduced. It is paid in addition to Family Tax Benefit A to families that rely on one main income. The main beneficiaries are sole parent families and families that have one partner participating in the workforce and the other at home caring for children.

"We are not opposed to tightening access so that high income families who do not rely on the payment would no longer be eligible. We support targeting the payment to those who really need it", said Samantha Page, Executive Director.

"This is an important payment for low income families and sole parents, we would not want to see them adversely affected by any changes. Sole parent families have additional costs associated with raising children on their own and may struggle to maintain housing even when earning a modest income. For this reason the payment in some form, must continue and any additional means testing must take into account the rising cost of housing, food and other necessities."

"We urge the Finance Minister Lindsay Tanner to meet with community and welfare groups to discuss the changes before finalising the details of any policy change. By and large we understand that the government needs to find savings in order to fund major investments in social inclusion and we are prepared to work collaboratively."

-ENDS-

FRSA Media Contact: Bonnie Montgomery, 02 6162 1811 or 0406 628 239

Family Relationship Services Australia is the national peak body for over 100 family relationship service providers, operating in more than 400 locations across Australia. FRSA's vision is for an Australian society that is enriched through respectful relationships in all their diversity.