

Tax Working Group Public Submissions Information Release

Release Document

September 2018

taxworkinggroup.govt.nz/key-documents

Key to sections of the Official Information Act 1982 under which information has been withheld.

Certain information in this document has been withheld under one or more of the following sections of the Official Information Act, as applicable:

- [1] 9(2)(a) - to protect the privacy of natural persons, including deceased people;
- [2] 9(2)(k) - to prevent the disclosure of official information for improper gain or improper advantage.

Where information has been withheld, a numbered reference to the applicable section of the Official Information Act has been made, as listed above. For example, a [1] appearing where information has been withheld in a release document refers to section 9(2)(a).

In preparing this Information Release, the Treasury has considered the public interest considerations in section 9(1) of the Official Information Act.

Recd
27/3/18

13/3/18

[1]

Dr. M. Cullers
4- Parliament Buildings,
Wellington.

Dear Dr. Cullers,

Having the utmost respect for your financial acumen and common sense, I was shocked and dismayed to hear the groups represented on the tax working group. It seems inconceivable to me that there was nobody representing the considerable number of people on benefits.

I myself ran afoul of the tax system as I struggled on the DRB, raising my four children during the 1980's and 90's. Nearly 30 years later, the injustice of the system that limits beneficiaries' earnings, has not been examined, let alone changed. This obtuseness on the part of Governments left or right, is a disgrace. It has effectively created an

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underclass of "dependent," "unemployable," stigmatised people, whose lives have been suffocated through their initiative being curtailed and thereby damaged. I myself have experienced the effects; I have made this point many times over the decades that I was "too lazy" to get off the benefit. It is a stigma that has cast a shadow over our entire family; being an intelligent & creative person, some people still believe that "living on hand-outs," is a personal, "lifestyle choice."

I would have expected that you of all people would have the courage and compassion to investigate this matter. As far as I am aware, the limit for earnings if you receive a benefit, is \$80 (eighty) dollars per week. Earnings beyond that, are progressively deducted so that if, for example, you earn \$10, you end up with \$2 in the hand. I challenge you and your team to come up with a humane, encouraging formula instead.

LYNDA MARA.