

That this House:

(1) recognises the provision of affordable medicines through the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) is central to Australia's health system;

(2) acknowledges that since its inception, the PBS is an uncapped program;

(3) agrees that evaluations of pharmaceuticals for listing under the PBS should be transparent, evidence based, and not subject to capricious political interference;

(4) notes that:

(a) before recommending medicines for listing on the PBS, the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee (PBAC) conducts a rigorous evaluation to determine the comparative clinical and cost effectiveness of the proposed medicine;

(b) the three tiers of major applications for PBS listings are designed to promote an efficient Government approval process; and

(c) positive recommendations by the PBAC have nearly always been approved by the Minister for Health;

(5) deplores the Government's new policy that:

(a) despite positive recommendations by the PBAC, all applications for listing will be further scrutinised by Cabinet;

(b) listing of medicines can be deferred indefinitely;

(c) no new PBS listings will occur unless offset savings are found; and

(d) until the budget returns to surplus, these measures will remain in place;

(6) recognises that:

(a) in scrutinising applications, the PBAC already determines value for money; and

(b) under the Government's new policy, access to medicines will be limited and medications which could improve the treatment of chronic or common conditions will remain financially unaffordable for many Australians; and

(7) condemns the Government for prioritising a return to surplus above the wellbeing of Australians.