



## Office of Hon Anne Tolley

MP for East Coast

Minister for Social Development

30 JUN 2015

Mr Alex Harris  
[fyi-request-2761-6f9e43dc@requests.fyi.org.nz](mailto:fyi-request-2761-6f9e43dc@requests.fyi.org.nz)

Dear Mr Harris,

On 23 May I received your email requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982, all advice I received on the benefit increase for families with children announced in Budget 2015 and its expected impact.

On 21 May 2015 the Government announced a \$790 million package to reduce hardship among children in New Zealand's poorest families, as the next step in the Government's commitment to address the long-term drivers of deprivation. The Support for Children in Hardship Bill, which supports this \$790 million Budget 2015 package, also passed its first reading in Parliament on 21 May 2015.

The Support for Children in Hardship Bill amends the Social Security, Inland Revenue and Educations Acts, to help deliver the key components of the Budget package, which includes:

- Increased work obligations for sole parents on a benefit.
- A \$25 a week after tax increase in benefit rates for families with children, the first increase outside of inflation adjustments since 1972.
- More childcare support to help low-income parents into work.
- An increase in Working for Families payments to low-income families not on a benefit.

The Bill will go through a full select committee process to enable the public to have their say, with changes coming into effect from 1 April 2016.

Your request for all advice concerning the benefit increase and its expected impact is refused under section 18(d) of the Official Information Act on the basis that the information requested will soon be publicly available on the Treasury website as part of the Budget 2015 proactive release in early July.

I hope you find this information concerning the benefit increase announced in Budget 2015 helpful. You have the right to seek an investigation and review of my response by the Ombudsman, whose address for contact purposes is:

The Ombudsman  
Office of the Ombudsman  
PO Box 10-152  
WELLINGTON 6143

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Anne Tolley', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Hon Anne Tolley  
Minister for Social Development