

Productivity Commission
Disability Discrimination Act Inquiry

Dear Sir/Madam

I have just read about your invitation to the public and thank you for the opportunity to make my submission re discrimination to the disabled.

My concerns are driven by a personal need for equal access, that is not there, in the community, for wheelchair dependent members of society. The overwhelming need for me is to be able to move as quickly and safely as possible from carpark/road levels to the footpath i.e. cross the kerbs which seem to be getting higher and wider than ever. Ramps or scoops are often non-existent in relatively new strips of shops that are built along highways all over our metro areas.

Also, why can shop owners spill their goods across the width of the footpath almost to the kerb? When I have suggested maybe they could have a sliding door or opens into the shop they have said 'it will never happen'. How can this be fair to someone who can not step off the footpath and back again to pass?

Recently I have tried to access various commercial places for tiles, carpet, lighting, paint and furniture and everywhere discrimination, by lack of access, is a huge problem.

You ask 'is the (anti) Discrimination Act working?'

I think in general there is more consideration for special needs, than there was 20yrs ago, but there is still a big shortfall when it comes to actuality in building and construction.

Mine is a severe acquired disability of (only) nine years.

My enclosures will make this letter seem bulky but I send them only to show

to you that I am at the 'coal face' of a need and have been trying to make a change but it really is too big and hard for me to continually be an an agitator with very little effect.

In 1987 Paul Omedic(?) the then Minister for Disabilities said "make it a reality not just a paper exercise". I'm afraid it does seem to be nothing more than a paper chase to me most of the time. Delays, buck passing, excuses or hollow promises do not replace action and concrete.

How are these issues written into law? We need something as simple as saying numerous access ways must be incorporated into every road and footpath and carpark area. They are not there now. I submit why are they not if anti-discrimination is working?

Thank you for this opportunity and every best wish.

Yours sincerely

Rosalie Leaney
(Mrs Rosalie Leaney)

cc Mark Hutson
- Disability Service Commission