

Media Release

Senator Rachel Siewert - Australian Greens spokesperson on community services

2 September 2017

Turnbull, this is not about 'practical love', it's about control

"Malcolm Turnbull's claims that the further rollout of the cashless welfare card is about 'practical love' is nonsense, this is about control", Australian Greens Senator Rachel Siewert said today.

"The card quarantines the income of people accessing a working age payment in the trial areas, that includes the Carers Payment, Disability Support Pension, Youth Allowance and Newstart.

"It takes agency from those who live on a shoestring budget who need to carefully manage their income.

"Controlling a person's financial decision making, coercion and punishment are not part of a loving relationship, the Prime Minister is clearly talking a lot of nonsense.

"If Mr Turnbull wants to talk about 'practical love', he could increase the woefully low income support payments and stop hacking away at the social safety net.

"The final evaluation report of the trials present some major concerns, it is deeply anecdotal, with concessions that the data sets may be skewed because of a heavy reliance on self-reporting, there are questions that are likely to result in bias, missing data and small data sets.

"Key crime stats were left out of the report that showed a worsening of some crimes in the trial locations.

"The Australian Greens are pouring over the detail of the report and speaking to experts but the data looks shaky at best. We will be chasing this up when Parliament resumes next week".