

1980-81

THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA
THE SENATE

(Presented pursuant to leave granted and read 1^o, 19 August 1981)

(SENATOR HAINES)

No. 155

A BILL

FOR

**An Act to amend certain Acts relating to sickness and hospital
benefits to provide for a voluntary contribution scheme for
health insurance**

BE IT ENACTED by the Queen, and the Senate and the House of
Representatives of the Commonwealth of Australia, as follows:

PART I—PRELIMINARY

Short title, &c.

1. (1) This Act may be cited as the *Health Acts Amendment Act (No. 2)* 1981.

Commencement

2 This Act shall come into operation on 1 July 1982.

Purpose

3. It is the purpose of this Act to provide a voluntary contribution scheme as an alternative to private health insurance, so that contributions to that scheme are proportionate to the gross income of contributors, and so that the

beneficiaries are persons whose income is such that they will pay less under the scheme than they would pay for private insurance.

PART II—AMENDMENTS OF THE HEALTH INSURANCE ACT 1973

4. The *Health Insurance Act* 1973 is in this Part referred to as the Principal Act.

5. Section 3 of the Principal Act is amended—

(a) by inserting in paragraph (a) of the definition of “dependant” in sub-section (1) after “pensioner”, wherever occurring, “or voluntary contributor”; and

(b) by inserting in sub-section (1) after the definition of “table” the following definition:

“‘voluntary contributor’ means a person who is registered as a voluntary contributor under section 5K.”.

6. The Principal Act is amended by inserting after section 5J the following section:

“Voluntary contributors

“5K. (1) A person who is not a medically insured person, a hospital insured person or a pensioner, or a dependant of such a person, may elect to be a voluntary contributor under this section.

“(2) The regulations shall provide procedures for the election referred to in sub-section (1) and for the registration of voluntary contributors.

“(3) A voluntary contributor shall pay to the Treasurer a sum in accordance with a prescribed scale of contributions in respect of each year or part of a year during which he is registered as a voluntary contributor.

“(4) Subject to sub-section (5), the sum paid by a voluntary contributor under sub-section (3) shall be proportionate to the gross income of the voluntary contributor.

“(5) The sum paid by a voluntary contributor shall not be greater than the sum which he would pay to a registered organisation or to registered organisations if he were a medically insured person and a hospital insured person.”.

7. Section 10 of the Principal Act is amended—

(a) by inserting in paragraph (1) (c) after “disadvantaged person”, wherever occurring, “or voluntary contributor”; and

(b) by inserting in paragraph (2) (a) “or voluntary contributor” after “disadvantaged person”.

8. Section 20A of the Principal Act is amended by inserting after “disadvantaged person”, wherever occurring, “or voluntary contributor”.

9. Section 20C of the Principal Act is amended by inserting in sub-section (8) “or voluntary contributors” after “disadvantaged persons”.

10. Section 23A of the Principal Act is amended by inserting in sub-paragraph (2) (d) (ii) “or a voluntary contributor” after “disadvantaged person”.

11. Section 130C of the Principal Act is amended by inserting in sub-section (1) “or a voluntary contributor” after “disadvantaged person”.

12. Section 130D of the Principal Act is amended by inserting “or a voluntary contributor” after “disadvantaged person”.

PART III—AMENDMENTS OF THE NATIONAL HEALTH ACT 1953

13. The *National Health Act* 1953 is in this Part referred to as the Principal Act.

14. Section 4 of the Principal Act is amended by inserting in sub-section (1) after the definition of “uninsured nursing home patient” the following definition:

“‘voluntary contributor’ means a voluntary contributor within the meaning of the *Health Insurance Act* 1973.”.

15. Section 81A of the Principal Act is amended by inserting in paragraphs (1) (a) and (c) “or a voluntary contributor” after “disadvantaged person”.

