**REQUEST TO JOIN EXEMPTION APPLICATION LODGED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF
FAMILIES, HOUSING, COMMUNITY SERVICES AND INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS (FaHCSIA)
UNDER S55 OF *THE DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION ACT* (1992) (CTH)**

I/VVe seek to join/support the exemption application submitted by FaHCSIA as follows:

* I/VVe seek an exemption for all existing ADEs from sections 15 and 24 of the DDA, and the Commonwealth (and officers of the Commonwealth) from section 29 for a period of three years.
* This exemption would apply to use of the BSWAT to:
1. assess wages for employees; and
2. pay wages to ADE employees based on assessments conducted under the BSWAT.
* The proposed exemption would apply while alternative wage setting arrangements are being considered, devised and/or established and implemented by FaHCSIA.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **NAME:** | Bernie O'Connor |  |
| **ORGANISATION: POSITION:** | Woodbine Inc |  |
| Chief Executive Officer |  |
| **SIGNATURE: By signing** this document I **certify that I have authority to sign on** behalf of the **organisation named above** |  | **1** |

**COMMENTS**

Woodbine provides supported employment for 31 people with a disability in Warracknabeal, a small town in the Wimmera, Victoria.

ADEs are simply not profitable, particularly in rural and remote regions. Woodbine's supported employment is provided as valued opportunities to people with a disability and as a service to the community. Commonwealth funding is supplemented by the agency to ensure continuity.

Without additional assistance and consideration of ***all the circumstances that apply to ADE's,*** the employment program will either cease or hours will be reduced to ensure viability.

