

MEDIA RELEASE

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Superannuation Consumer Centre recognises the importance of independent advocacy

Working Australians will benefit from the Federal Government's \$10 million investment to establish a Superannuation Consumer Centre. The Consumer Action Law Centre said that the plan to establish a consumer advocacy body to work in superannuation showed that the Government recognises the importance of independent advocacy.

In a market based economy, it is critical that consumer voices are able to be heard as well as the voices of the businesses that operate in those markets. This is one of the best ways to ensure that producer and consumer needs are appropriately balanced.

'Superannuation is one of the biggest investments many Australians will make in their lifetime. At the same time, Superannuation products can be confusing and the market can be hard to navigate. There is a clear role for an independent body to promote simplicity and solutions that work for consumers in policy making, as well as encouraging consumer engagement. We expect this initiative will be welcomed by the community', said Catriona Lowe, co-CEO of Consumer Action.

'As well as being one of the biggest investments Australians make, it is also one of the most important, and can have tangible effects on the quality of their retirement. We think that having an advocacy body which is independent of Government and industry will help maintain a fair and competitive superannuation market'.

Ms Lowe said there were a number of reports which pointed to the benefits of consumer advocacy and that consumers should look forward to the positive impact the new advocacy centre could have in superannuation. 'It is exciting to think that consumers could have a strong and dedicated centre fighting for their rights in superannuation. Furthermore, the centre will be part of a network of consumer organisations across Australia that seek to further consumer rights and will benefit from their experience'.

'We've previously welcomed the Government's reforms regarding conflicted remuneration and financial advice for the benefit of superannuation consumers. Investment in the new centre is a great way of helping ensure that the spirit of those reforms plays out in practice,' said Ms Lowe.

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