# Template letter for writing to an MP about Cashless Card.

[MP’s name

MPs Address]

 [Date]

Dear [Mr/Mrs/Ms Last Name],

My name is [your name] and I am writing to ask you to vote against the Social Services Legislation Amendment (Cashless Debit Card) Bill 2017.

[Are you a member of their electorate? If so include that information]

[Do you have any first-hand experience with cashless welfare? Include some details here about how these experiences have influenced your views. This will demonstrate you are well qualified]

The Bill proposes to indefinitely extend the program in current sites, and opens up the possibility of a nation-wide expansion of the card. However, this ignores extensive evidence indicating that cashless welfare does not achieve desirable outcomes.

As reported recently in T*he Guardian*, the data from the cashless welfare trials in Ceduna and Kimberly have shown that not only has the card failed to reduce consumption of alcohol consumption, drugs or gambling, it has actually led to an increase in family violence.

[Have you or someone you know had any first hand experience with cashless welfare? Include experiences here]

I am deeply concerned that cashless welfare recipients will be significantly less able to participate in the cash-economy – an important source of cheap products, particularly for people living on a Newstart payment $390 per fortnight below the poverty line. There are also a number of essential items that are only available in the cash economy. For example, how is someone meant to pay rent in a shared house if his or her landlord only accepts cash? This will force welfare recipients deeper into poverty.

[What do you buy on a regular basis that can only be bought in cash? List some examples here]

I also have significant privacy concerns about allowing a private company, Indue, to handle the finances of welfare recipients. Additionally, the government have stated that people on the card who want to access more of their payment in cash will have to apply to an anonymous community panel – a serious breach of privacy.

On a broader level, compulsory income management stigmatises people and separates them from mainstream society even further, disallowing social mobility and scapegoating those living in poverty.

I am calling on you to protect welfare recipients from this unjust and unreasoned policy. I implore you to use your power and platform to vote against a Bill that picks on and hurts the most vulnerable people in our society.

I would also very much like to meet you to discuss this matter further. Please could you contact me to arrange a suitable time?

Thank you for your help with this matter, I look forward to your response.

Best wishes,

[Your name]
[Your Address]
[Your Phone Number]
[Your Email]

[Tips: try to keep the letter under 2 pages]