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**NOTHING ABOUT US WITHOUT US**

**PRESS RELEASE – Immediate Release 19/04/2022**

**Autistic Self Advocacy Peak Body Welcomes Labor Commitment to National Autism Strategy and NDIS (National Disability Insurance Scheme) overhaul.**

The Autistic Self Advocacy Network of Australia and New Zealand welcomes the announcement today from Bill Shorten that Labor commits to a **National Autism Strategy** informed by the findings of the Disability Royal Commission and the Senate Select Committee Inquiry into Autism.

Bill Shorten said that Labor’s commitment to the disability community is that the party will work from the philosophy of **‘Nothing About Us Without Us**’ the central platform of the Disability Rights Movement.

*“The commitment to a National Autism Strategy is an important acknowledgement of the disadvantages that Autistic people face across the life span when it comes to accessing both disability and mainstream services and of equal importance is the commitment to co-design with people with disability”* says Katharine Annear, Operations Manager of ASAN AUNZ.

It was also important today to have the Autistic Community represented at the policy launch by ASAN AUNZ and ICAN Network founder Chris Varney and ICAN Network Policy Analyst James Ong as well as Chloe Polglaze and other young self-advocates from Children and Young People with Disability Australia. We welcome the commitment of an extra 10 million dollars to disability advocacy services and urge Labor to commit to Advocacy by and for Autistic People.

Of note also are the commitments to overhaul the NDIS. With over a third of NDIS Participants having a primary diagnosis of Autism a commitment to getting the scheme right will mean enhanced quality of life for Autistic Australian’s who are NDIS Participants.

Finally, we acknowledge Labor’s commitment to crack down on the cowboys in disability service provision and hope that this will mean we will see an end to sharp practice, aggressive marketing, and unregulated providers in the Autism Early Intervention space.

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