



**Media Release  
4 August 2010**

## **Dear Mr Abbott**

We note that you have apologised for your gaffe in referring to cinema access for deaf and blind people as being “waffle”.

It is easy to apologise for this sort of flippant insult.

It is not so easy to effect an attitude transplant that would result in a genuine understanding of and empathy with the issues that affect millions of people with disabilities – who, incidentally, vote.

In an effort to encourage this attitude transplant, Deaf Australia would like to invite you to dinner.

There is an old saying: “In a room full of Deaf people, it’s the hearing person who can’t sign who is disabled.”

As an educational experience, your dinner companions therefore will be Deaf people who use Auslan. No interpreter will be present since after all interpreters provide communication access and are no doubt “waffle” at this stage of your education.

The dinner of course will be at your expense since Deaf Australia, like so many other organisations trying to get a fairer go for disabled people, cannot afford to wine and dine politicians.

We would also expect at this dinner further announcements on how you intend to ensure that all people with disabilities are able to live a life of dignity in a socially inclusive society.

Since you are a very busy man, we are happy to organise this dinner in a city at a time of your choosing. Just let us know when you can make it and we will be delighted to arrange it.

Yours sincerely

Kyle Miers  
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### **About Deaf Australia:**

Deaf Australia is the only national peak body for deaf people managed by deaf people. We represent, promote and preserve the Australian Deaf community and its language and culture. We provide an advocacy and information service for and about deaf people. We work with the deaf community and stakeholders in the best interest of deaf people.

Deaf Australia (established in 1986) is the Australian national member of the World Federation of the Deaf, is a founding member of Australian Federation of Disability Organisations (AFDO), and works cooperatively with many organisations to achieve a better quality of life for deaf people.

Deaf Australia is funded by the Australian Government through the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs.

**Further information:**

Deaf Australia Inc.: [www.deafau.org.au](http://www.deafau.org.au)

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