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**‘Disability Peaks Forced to Close Doors on People with Disability’ said Matthew Wright, Chief Executive Officer of the Australian Federation of Disability Organisations and spokesperson for the disability peaks**

Ten peak organisations run by people with disability will be left with no choice but to either close their doors or reduce services, with seven organisations subject to drastic funding cuts by outgoing Minister for Social Services, Kevin Andrews.

Together the disability peak bodies represent over 90% of Australians with disability and 83% of the identified disability groups in Australia. The organisations have over 200,000 supporters, including 140 organisations, consumer groups, service providers and carer associations.

“Organisations with over 200 combined years of expertise will be forced to shut their doors in three months time - leaving people who are blind, deaf, hearing impaired, people with intellectual disability, people with brain injury, people with autism and people with physical disabilities with no voice and no specialist representation”, said spokesperson Mr Matthew Wright.

“This expertise cannot be replicated. Once it’s lost, it’s lost. Our organisations have actively engaged in the Government’s workforce agenda, however this decision leaves our 200,000 constituents with a disability and their 140 supportive organisations out in the cold.

We believe that this decision, which reflects a misunderstanding of people with disability, will have significant ramifications on the ability of the Government to successfully implement reform for people with disability, including changes to income support and real efforts to increase economic participation.

Without specific representation, people with disability will be vulnerable to adverse outcomes in these areas and more.

This morning we requested an urgent meeting with incoming Minister Scott Morrison to discuss the decision before the voice of people with disability is irreversibly impacted”, said Mr Wright.

Consumer organisations that have been defunded or not funded to represent the specialist voice of people with disability under Department of Social Services contracts include:

- Australian Federation of Disability Organisations
- Autism Aspergers Advocacy Australia
- Blind Citizens Australia
- Brain Injury Australia
- Deaf Australia
- Deafness Forum of Australia
- Down Syndrome Australia
- National Council on Intellectual Disability
- Physical Disability Australia
- Short Statured People of Australia

**Please direct all enquiries to Mr Matthew Wright on 0428 608 861.**