



FAMILY FIRST



Steve Fielding **Family First** Senator for Victoria

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NEW OMBUDSMAN POWERLESS TO STOP UNFAIR BANK PENALTY FEES

THE new Financial Ombudsman Service will do nothing to stop banks slugging families with outrageous bank penalty fees, Family First Leader Senator Steve Fielding said today.

"Families have nowhere to turn when they are slugged by outrageous bank penalty fees, which is why Family First wants to ensure bank fees are for cost recovery rather than a blatant profit grab," Senator Fielding said.

"The Rudd Government has done nothing to help families struggling to pay bank penalty fees of up to \$50 a pop.

"The new Financial Ombudsman Service will not have the power to help people with complaints about exorbitant bank penalty fees, because the Banking Ombudsman merged into the new organisation never had those powers.

"That's why Family First proposed new laws that would make the Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC) responsible for monitoring fees and handling complaints."

Today the Federal Government launched the new Financial Ombudsman Service, merging the Banking and Financial Services Ombudsman, the Financial Industry Complaints Service, and the Insurance Ombudsman Service.

Family First's *Fair Bank and Credit Card Fees Bill 2008* has been referred to the Senate Economics Committee for report by 16 September 2008.

For media enquiries phone 0409 550 446

www.stevefielding.com.au