



Speech by

Mr T. SULLIVAN

MEMBER FOR CHERMSIDE

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APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL; APPROPRIATION BILL

Committee (Cognate Debate)

Estimates Committee D

Report

Mr SULLIVAN (ChermSIDE—ALP) (5.45 p.m.): I am pleased to speak on the report of Estimates Committee D. I thank the committee members, the Ministers involved and the committee staff for the smooth operation of that committee. One of the key things that came out of that hearing related to funding by the Department of Families, Youth and Community Care for intellectual disability services.

I think back to the move of residents from the Challinor Centre to Chuwar under the coalition. This was a massive bungle. The contract was very suspect and there was a 20-year fraudulent deal done. I compare that situation with the move made under the current Minister, where the residents of Challinor will be located at Loganlea.

In coming to that decision and bringing that about, the Minister and the department had face-to-face consultation with the local residents. Members of the department doorknocked residents, and local people met with the Minister and with the families of people who have a disability. As a result of that consultation process, the operation has gone extremely smoothly and there is great acceptance within the community of those people.

That is compared with a situation on the north side a couple of years ago. I was disgusted to read that some residents of a northern suburb were opposing the establishment of a residence in which some people with disability would be housed. I think at that stage the member for Aspley, Mr Goss, supported the local residents. I would hope that that sort of attitude has gone from the north side and from our thinking. I hope that what occurred at Loganlea could occur in the future—that local residents can be informed about what is happening and be very accepting of people within their area.

I refer to an earlier interjection made by the member for Callide. I believe that in country towns where people know the families and the people with disabilities there is great acceptance of those people because they are known. In the city, overcoming the fear is a problem because we do not have the same intimacy that smaller communities have. I think that is something we can learn from the smaller rural towns. Gaining information about the people with disabilities and meeting them and their families will help overcome fear.

This is the biggest single injection of funding into the area of disability services since this whole area was funded by Governments. \$15m for the half year has already been injected and will be injected into this area. That is part of the Government's promised \$126m over four years. The Beattie Government, through this Minister, is delivering to people with disabilities. The very fact that this Minister has the name "Minister for Disability" says to these people and their families, "You are of such significance to us that someone will be particularly responsible for your area and for your needs." I congratulate the Premier on that move. This contrasts starkly with the coalition's promise of \$30m per year under former Minister Lingard. Of course, he delivered almost nothing.

The Beattie Labor Government, through Minister Bligh, is meeting the commitments of industrial awards. We all saw the disaster of a couple of years ago where the SACS Award was being negotiated and was coming to fruition, yet money was not set aside in order to meet those commitments. This contrasts starkly with previous enterprise bargaining arrangements, whereby teachers and nurses were

in discussions with Government departments and money was set aside in anticipation of a result. It was an absolute disgrace that people in the community services and family services sectors were not given the same respect or treatment. When people say, "We don't want to waste money. We need money for services such as", they are all saying "health and education". I hope that every member of this Assembly would add a third one to that: family services.

One judgment of a civilised society is how we treat those who are least advantaged. I believe that unless we start to look at family services funding in greater depth and start to address those with greatest need, we will not show ourselves to be as civilised and as committed as we should be. I commend the report to the Chamber.
