



Speech by

KAREN STRUTHERS

MEMBER FOR ARCHERFIELD

Hansard 9 June 1999

FAMILY FRIENDLY WORKPLACES

Ms STRUTHERS (Archerfield—ALP) (10.23 a.m.): There has been a lot of talk about the need for our workplaces and social institutions to be more family friendly. However, not much is changing to get a better balance between work and family. In fact, there is growing economic pressure on families to earn dual incomes.

Last week, the National Centre for Social and Economic Modelling made the disturbing prediction that the single-income family could be wiped off the map within 15 years. Many families in my area, particularly in suburbs such as Calamvale, Forest Lake and Algester, are dual income families. For some, this is a choice; for others, they say that there is no choice but for both partners to work long hours. There is plenty of evidence to show that social problems, such as family breakdown, poor health and substance abuse, thrive in environments where there is all work and no play—where there is little time for family members to spend quality time with each other.

I am pleased that Minister Paul Braddy has been having a good look at family friendly strategies relating to working hours, pay equity and parental and carer's leave. I would like to see us step this up a gear to develop a comprehensive Government strategy to better balance work and family needs. Given the late nights that we are having this week, I am sure that members would agree that a good place for us to start is to set an example by making the Parliament a much more family friendly work environment.
