



Speech by

Mrs LIZ CUNNINGHAM

MEMBER FOR GLADSTONE

Hansard 22 July 1999

MR G. NUTTER

Mrs LIZ CUNNINGHAM (Gladstone—IND) (7.20 p.m.): I rise to highlight the plight of Mr Glen Nutter, a young man in my electorate who is seeking a chance to prove his competence to drive a manual motor vehicle. After several relatively minor work related incidents at the Gunpowder mine, Glen contracted Group A streptococcus organism and is now a bilateral amputee.

After his accident and following rehabilitation, he was assessed under the Occupational Therapy Driving Assessment Program and was reported by his assessor as being eligible to drive an automatic vehicle with left spinner knobs and right-hand controls. However, that report should be qualified by the fact that Glen was not given an opportunity either then or subsequently to be tested on a manual vehicle with standard appointments. Glen has driven a standard four-wheel-drive vehicle off road on a friend's farm for some time, and he has approached my office seeking reasons why he cannot be tested by the local Transport Department on a standard manual vehicle.

The main impediment to his being tested is not the attitude of the local Transport Department people—quite the opposite. The difficulty is the guidelines set out by the Department of Transport which stipulate that medical practitioners have to assess people with disabilities. The assessment guidelines prescribe the type of amputee category, the modification on the vehicle required and the types of vehicles that they can drive. There is no opportunity for those people to show their competence to drive. They are shoved into a type of vehicle according to their amputee category.

I believe Glen is justifiably frustrated, because all he is asking for is to be able to prove his competence in a dual control vehicle. I have written to the executive director of Land Transport and Safety, who said that Glen must get a clearance from the local doctor to be able to show that he is medically competent to be tested. However, the local doctor is guided by the medical guidelines and so it is a vicious circle. He gets a letter from the doctor saying, yes, he can be tested, but only in a modified vehicle.

Time expired.
