



Speech by

Ted Malone

MEMBER FOR MIRANI

Hansard Thursday, 11 October 2007

RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN EMBRYOS AND PROHIBITION OF HUMAN CLONING AMENDMENT BILL

Mr MALONE (Mirani—NPA) (3.54 pm): I rise to speak in the debate on the Research Involving Human Embryos and Prohibition of Human Cloning Amendment Bill. This has been a confronting issue for all of us in this chamber. We have all had to examine our consciences and decide where we sit on this issue. Unfortunately, we all have doubts in terms of our beliefs and attitudes to human cloning and the research that goes alongside that. We have heard some mature and compelling debate on both sides of the argument. It has been a very levelling experience for parliamentarians to treat other parliamentarians in such a considerate way. For me it has been uplifting.

I do not intend to speak at great length on the issue because I believe most of the points on both sides of the argument have been very well canvassed and explored to the greatest extent. With the research work that is going on at an ever-escalating speed we are seeing great breakthroughs in medical science that a few years ago were unheard of and not thought of. We really look forward over the next decade to the research that will take place in terms of adult stem cells. In the chamber over the last two days we have heard about some of this work and the marvellous cures.

We may get cures for cancer, diabetes, Parkinson's disease, MS and the other debilitating diseases that afflict people as they move through life. It really does bring into focus the frailty of human life when we see the diseases that people face on a daily basis. I doubt whether there is one member in this chamber who has not had a close relative or good friend who has been afflicted with one or more of these diseases. We see spinal cord trauma on a regular basis with our young sportsmen and our young people on our roads. Their life can change forever as a result of a simple accident. A friend of mine in Mackay is in that situation. He and his wife's only child and only son at the age 16 became a paraplegic after a very simple bike accident. We would never have expected it to have created that sort of trauma.

I have examined my conscience. With all the words that have been spoken in the House today and all the information that has been made available to us, I find that I am personally not totally comfortable with the safeguards that are currently contained in this bill. Therefore, I will be voting against the bill.