



Speech by

Hon. Anastacia Palaszczuk

MEMBER FOR INALA

Hansard Thursday, 4 June 2009

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Disability Services

Hon. A PALASZCZUK (Inala—ALP) (Minister for Disability Services and Multicultural Affairs) (10.20 am): These are tough economic times and, as a government, we have made fundamental decisions about what a responsible government needs to be involved in and what it does not need to be involved in. The Labor government has an established tradition of supporting the most vulnerable members of our community. That is why we invest significant money into caring for those in our community who are unable to care for themselves.

In relation to Disability Services, we have a strong record of achievement. Since 1999-2000, there has been a record 228 per cent increase in funding for Disability Services, at a time when the budget was around \$250 million. Today, the Disability Services budget is \$825 million. In contrast, when the opposition was in power it failed to invest in the disability sector.

Our approach is to continue to build the infrastructure to meet the needs of those with a disability, ensuring that they have safe and secure accommodation as well as securing jobs for Queenslanders. We are continuing to build respite centres across the state to meet the needs of people with a disability and their families. We have invested \$28.4 million in this area. These services enable families and people with a disability to have a break while remaining together in the community. We are continuing to build houses to move young people out of aged-care facilities.

We are committed to valuing the human rights of people with a disability, respecting their dignity and creating more inclusive communities. But I recognise more needs to be done. Currently, we assist thousands of Queenslanders with a disability and their families. With an ever-increasing ageing population there will be an increasing demand for support and services in the coming years.

The Bligh government remains committed to ensuring that disability services are responsive to the needs of the community. That is why we are working so closely with our non-government partners, including organisations such as the Endeavour Foundation, the Cerebral Palsy League, Centacare, Montrose Access, Deaf Services Queensland, Vision Australia and the Autism Early Intervention Outcomes Unit to deliver a range of services. We need to ensure that services continue to be delivered to people right throughout Queensland.