



Speech by

Michael Crandon

MEMBER FOR COOMERA

Hansard Thursday, 11 February 2010

SURROGACY BILL; FAMILY (SURROGACY) BILL

Mr CRANDON (Coomera—LNP) (2.40 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate of the Family (Surrogacy) Bill and Surrogacy Bill 2009 and to put my views on the record. My views have been developed following much soul searching and much reading of the views of a large cross-section of the broader community. I cannot in all conscience accept that a social need, in my interpretation of that term, is without any doubt in the best interests of a child. The fact that there are cases put forward where a child being reared in a same-sex relationship has been successful does not provide a basis of proof that a child coming into the world under those circumstances will be successful. Nor is it the case that because there are children being successfully reared in a single-parent household that is proof that rearing a child brought into the world intentionally through surrogacy arrangements in a single-parent household will be successful.

A child has one chance at childhood. It is up to us as legislators to ensure that that chance is the best one possible in these very special circumstances. Once all the medical options have been canvassed and those options ruled out and rigorous testing has confirmed there is no chance, then and only then, in my view, should altruistic surrogacy be viewed as appropriate and only in circumstances where a mum and dad are the parents.

I can imagine a case where a woman chooses not to have a child for social reasons, not medical reasons. It may be that the woman has a career and does not want a break in that career that carrying and giving birth to a child may cause. In that case it is for convenience. I do not believe that that social need is acceptable. That is not a good reason for an altruistic surrogacy option to be used. This concept is not acceptable to me as it smacks of self-interest and that is not what altruistic surrogacy is about.

The gift of a child is just that: a gift. It is not a right. The thought that a child is made to fulfil the want of a man or woman as a convenience is totally unacceptable to me. So we come down to needs and wants: the need to use altruistic surrogacy for genuine and proven medical reasons as opposed to wanting to use surrogacy for a social or convenient purpose. There is a vast difference between these two points and that is at the crux of this matter.

I oppose the Surrogacy Bill 2009 because of what it does not do—and that is it does not put the interests of the child first. If the Surrogacy Bill 2009 is voted into law today, it will be my view that should the LNP gain government we will undo the wrong of the bill's current form. We will bring the best interests of the child back to the fore. I support the Family (Surrogacy) Bill 2009, introduced by the LNP, because it does put the child first. I commend that bill to the House.