




Speech by

Dale Shuttleworth

MEMBER FOR FERNY GROVE

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DISABILITY SERVICES (YOUR LIFE YOUR CHOICE) AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr SHUTTLEWORTH** (Ferny Grove—LNP) (7.52 pm): I rise this evening to speak in support of the Disability Services (Your Life Your Choice) Amendment Bill 2012. The bill is reflective of a changing approach to disability services delivery. In recent years, particularly with the emergence of human rights instruments like the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, disability service systems in Australia and overseas have been undergoing major reforms. These reforms have been focused on providing people with a disability more opportunities to exercise choice and control over their supports. The reform has involved introducing person centred planning, where a person with disability is central to the planning and deciding of their own disability supports; increasing the range of supports that are available; and moving away from block funding of service providers to individualised funding that includes the opportunity for persons with a disability to receive funding directly.

There are some significant reforms being undertaken across Australia. For example, the My Way project under development in Western Australia is focused on providing people with disability, their families and carers the opportunity to exercise genuine choice and control over their supports and services and focuses on early engagement to identify needs; flexible, local and responsive access to supports and resources; and increased levels of choice for supports and resources. New South Wales, as part of its disability service reform Stronger Together, is consulting on how best to reflect choice and control and person centred planning in its service system.

The Your Life Your Choice framework and this bill will ensure that Queensland has a contemporary disability service system that provides true choice and control for people with a disability over their funding. Your Life Your Choice will be established in two phases. The first phase commences by outlining a regime of providers who can assist people with disabilities with the procurement of their service. The second phase will be a direct funded provision through to individuals with disability.

There is a strong interest in this bill from within my electorate of Ferny Grove, both from individuals who may benefit directly from this initiative and from the family support or community groups. The transition to individual funding is keenly awaited. I digress a little to reflect upon a time just after the COAG meeting at which Premier Newman had been taking some heat over the state not signing up to an undisclosed sum of money for an undisclosed period of time in an undefined NDIS and the trials that are currently being undertaken. I remember driving out to Samford showgrounds where Riding for the Disabled, a community group that operates there every weekend, were undertaking their weekly activities. I would have to say that the mood surrounding the event that day was quite tense upon my arrival. I listened to the concerns of all of the parents who were there and I expressed that day the same as I have expressed every day since—that is, in my own personal view, the position of this state, in our resolute standing and our constant support for the NDIS, represents an outstanding approach. But what we cannot afford to do is set false expectations and raise the hopes of people most desperate and in need of the most support.

I really do commend the minister for bringing this bill to the House. I acknowledge also the level of funding and the way we are approaching this into the future. As I have said to many people throughout my

electorate, what we can least afford to do is build a level of expectation that their futures will be far better under a program that is completely unfunded and which we certainly cannot, at this point, support. This bill in its standing does lead us a long way down the track towards the NDIS and will ensure that in the interim those most in need have a level of security about the future on which they are about to embark.

The government at this point recognises that true client choice requires that there is a range of quality supports and services that people can access. This is why in this challenging fiscal environment the government has maintained its funding to disability services and continues to provide \$1.3 billion for disability services, with state funding for 2012-13 to be \$959 million. This bill, the government's funding commitment and its strategy to strengthen front-line disability services will ensure we have a contemporary response and a viable disability services system.

In closing, I cannot overlook the statement of reservations submitted through the committee by those opposite. Scattered throughout the statement is a continual attempt to paint this government as one without compassion towards an NDIS. As I have continually expressed to my constituents who have read similar statements throughout the media and have approached me in this regard, and as I repeat here this evening, we are totally committed to an NDIS. But as the Productivity Commission has expressed, this must be federally funded. Conversely, this Newman-led government is getting on with providing real and tangible advantage to those who need it most. We will continue to provide initiatives and secure funding on into the future. In closing, I thank my fellow committee members; the chair, the member for Redlands; and the secretariat, including Sue Cawcutt. I commend the bill to the House.