




Speech By
Dr Christian Rowan

MEMBER FOR MOGGILL

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DISABILITY SERVICES AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (4.57 pm): I rise to address the Disability Services and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015. This legislation amends the Disability Services Act 2006, the Guardianship and Administration Act 2000, the Powers of Attorney Act 1998, the Public Guardian Regulation 2014 and the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000. The primary purpose of the Disability Services and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015 is to assist with the transition to, and the implementation of, the National Disability Insurance Scheme here in Queensland. Whilst there are many agencies in Queensland which will have amendments to their portfolio legislation, this legislation deals with the important element of ensuring a high-functioning, quality assurance system with appropriate checks and balances as a key foundation and pillar of the new disability services framework.

With the transition from a state based jurisdictional model to the National Disability Insurance Scheme, a number of changes and amendments are required here in Queensland. It is important that Queenslanders who are currently receiving disability support and services via the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services continue to receive a high standard of care with appropriate oversight and the necessary powers by government to monitor the performance of disability service providers and the care of vulnerable individuals.

Supporting those with an impairment, whether cognitive, physical, developmental, congenital or otherwise, is the right thing to do as a compassionate society. Ongoing advocacy, reform and support for those with disabilities in Queensland is vitally important. Ensuring that mechanisms are in place to address the rights of people with an impairment must continue to evolve as part of a tolerant Queensland, particularly with respect to the local implementation of the National Disability Insurance Scheme. I would encourage successive Queensland governments to invest in rights related education and training for carers and families of those who live with a disability.

Ensuring coordination of care and collaboration among service providers will optimise outcomes for all in the disability sector. Transforming the lives of those with a disability by providing hope and a real future through private-public partnerships needs to be core business of government. Promoting employment opportunities by flexible work practices, including individualised contracts and tailored hours of work, will increase the workforce participation of those living with a disability. I know that the newly appointed federal Assistant Minister for Disability Services, the Hon. Jane Prentice MP, will be a great advocate for ongoing reform in this important public policy area, and I congratulate the federal member for Ryan on her recent appointment as part of the Turnbull ministry.

In my electorate of Moggill we are very fortunate to have the McIntyre Centre. This community organisation offers pony riding and other equine programs for people with a disability. The McIntyre Centre's strategic purpose is to deliver evidence based education and therapy programs with the ancillary benefits of enjoyment, recreation and support for participants and their families. I take this

opportunity to recognise the hard work of the McIntyre Centre board chairman Mr Mac Boulton, his fellow board members, CEO Mr Jankees van der Have and the many staff, coaches and support workers, including Michelle Beatty, Veronica White and James Green, as part of this organisation assisting many in our community with disabilities. The translational benefits to many of the McIntyre Centre's program participants are truly inspirational, given the improvements in physical, psychological, social, educational and occupational functioning that I have seen firsthand.

I conclude by commending the members of the former Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee for their work, along with the inquiry staff, technical scrutiny staff, committee staff and current members of the Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee for their work in finalising report No. 13 with respect to the Disability Services and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015. I would also like to acknowledge all those who made submissions to the committee.

Ensuring transparency and clear accountability in our disability services sector is an important endeavour for our state of Queensland as we transition to the local implementation of the National Disability Insurance Scheme. Ensuring that the rights, safeguards and protections of those with disabilities are maintained is a fundamental responsibility of all elected members of the current Queensland parliament. I commend the bill and the recommendations contained in the committee report to the House.