



Speech By  
**Ros Bates**


**MEMBER FOR MUDGEERABA**

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Record of Proceedings, 1 September 2016

**PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT**

**Child Protection**

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (10.14 am): This morning I am tabling a petition with over 30,000 signatures, one of the largest ever petitions presented to the Queensland parliament. This petition includes the names of 30,000 everyday people who want to see all Queensland children get the care and protection they need and deserve from our community and our child safety system.

*Tabled paper:* Nonconforming petition regarding a law for the investigation and reporting of suspected child abuse [1428].

I would like to give special acknowledgement to Alicia Duvall, who is here in the chamber today, a concerned Caboolture local who, off her own bat, initiated a petition to raise awareness of perceived shortfalls in our child safety systems and gaps in current legislation. Alicia's petitions reads—

No child who is referred by a doctor as having sustained injuries intentionally inflicted or sexual in nature will be sent home until a full investigation is completed.

When such a medical professional or Hospital reports the likelihood of abuse that such a report will be treated in the same manner as a 000 phone call; A LIFE AT RISK, so that these children will be treated as a priority emergency.

Alicia's petition not only raises awareness but also seeks to bring about positive change. Today marks the start of Child Protection Week and later this afternoon the Child Protection Week awards ceremony will be held in the Premier's Hall to recognise those in the sector who dedicate their lives to keeping our youngest and our most vulnerable Queenslanders—our children—safe. Today's ceremony marks the official launch of Queensland Child Protection Week, which runs from 4 to 10 September. This year's theme is 'Protecting Children is Everyone's Business' and, clearly, over 30,000 people have made it their business by signing Alicia's petition.

Child Protection Week is a time to reflect on how we as a community can play our part to protect children right across this state and, in fact, right across this country. To our child safety officers and staff, we say thank you for the tireless work you do day in, day out. To the community and support sector who help damaged and broken families pick up the pieces, to our foster-carers who open their homes and their hearts, without you the system would not work. I also want to acknowledge the health workers, teachers, nurses and police who all play their part in this important and very challenging environment.

There is nothing more important than the protection of our most vulnerable Queenslanders, our children, and this petition advocates for positive change. That is why when in government the LNP instigated the far-reaching commission of inquiry into child protection of which we accepted all 121 recommendations and plotted out the road map for the future. The inquiry was established to overhaul a system that was clearly failing. The LNP's commitment over five years to implement the commission's recommendations included funding 77 new front-line child safety officers. This allowed us to reform the child protection system and help make Queensland the safest state in Australia to raise children. Protecting children is everyone's business.