




Speech By  
**Ros Bates**

**MEMBER FOR MUDGEERABA**

---

Record of Proceedings, 3 November 2016

**PETITION: MOTION TO TAKE NOTE**

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (11.37 am): This week in the House we have seen yet another exceptional display of buck-passing and fearmongering from those opposite, this time in relation to the rollout of the National Disability Insurance Scheme. This is the most significant reform of a generation when it comes to disability services, but, sadly, those opposite could not resist when they saw an opportunity to play politics and create an issue out of thin air. It is a shameless attempt to blame the federal government for all of their woes and distract from their obvious failings as a government to deliver in the area of disability services.

In a bizarre campaign fuelled by misinformation we have seen the member for Morayfield as the principal petitioner and the member for Ashgrove as the sponsoring member start a petition in relation to school bus funding under the NDIS. The rallying cry of their petition calls for certainty from the federal government that the School Transport Assistance Program for Students with Disabilities in Queensland will continue to be available under the NDIS from 1 January 2020.

In typical Labor fashion, we see a Labor government willing to spread misinformation to people in our community who need certainty in a time of unprecedented change. People with disability are increasingly concerned about this misinformation, and I have been contacted to correct the political spin in this petition. The truth of this matter is that the federal government has already confirmed that transport to and from school for people with disability will be covered and can be included under NDIS packages when the rollout is complete.

There will be no changes to the way school transport services are run in the near future. The NDIS is designed to make sure that parents will be able to make decisions in the best interests of their child and their individual needs. Following consultation with the Queensland government and in an effort to ensure stable transition of school transport into the NDIS during the transition period, the existing school transport services administered by the Queensland government will continue to be available. All Australian governments, including the Queensland government, have already agreed that the NDIS is the most appropriate system to fund transport supports. This will include training and support to use the participants' mobility devices where it is viable in public transport; modification to private vehicles and driver assessment and training; costs associated with innovative transport options for people who cannot travel independently or use public transport; costs associated with the use of taxis or private transport for participants who cannot travel independently or use public transport; and transport to and from school or educational facilities where this would not substitute for parental responsibility and no other transport options are appropriate.

This is a broad set of criteria which will cover those who need it most in our state. Given that Queensland has already agreed to these policy principles, Queenslanders could be forgiven for thinking that the members for Morayfield and Ashgrove are either unaware of these policies or simply did not bother to check. I share the federal assistant minister's disappointment that this petition is causing

concern and distress among parents and carers of children who are regular users of these bus services which are currently funded by the state government as a result of a baseless misinformation campaign. During the transition period, existing school transport services administered by the Queensland government such as school bus services will continue to be available to all current users. This has already been agreed to as part of the in-kind services provided by the Queensland government. A key objective of the NDIS is to provide people with disability choice and control over the supports and services they access in day-to-day life, and giving them the ability to tailor their transport method to suit their needs will be a key consideration.

In preparation for the full scheme in 2019, I understand the National Disability Insurance Agency is now working to understand how students and their families or carers can be provided with increased levels of choice and control over the school transport services they access. Various options are now being considered and key stakeholders are being consulted, including state governments, which the members for Morayfield and Ashgrove should be aware of. It absolutely beggars belief that, despite this publicly available information which members and the Minister for Disability Services should know, they are still determined to spread blatant fabrications to people with disability, and the reason is simple: to distract from their own abysmal record in disability services. We on this side of the House understand the importance of disability service funding and the National Disability Insurance Scheme to people with disability. I urge those opposite to stop playing politics, stop their fearmongering and start delivering for people with disabilities in this state.

*(Time expired)*