




Speech By  
**Hon. Shannon Fentiman**

**MEMBER FOR WATERFORD**

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**CHILD PROTECTION REFORM AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Communities, Women and Youth, Minister for Child Safety and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (5.54 pm), in reply: I want to thank all members for their contributions to today's debate. As many members in this House have acknowledged, the introduction of the suite of permanency reforms will allow children and young people to achieve stability earlier to allow them to thrive and reach their full potential in adulthood. The commission of inquiry understood that supporting a child's family does provide stability and certainty for a child. As noted by the Carmody report—

Ultimately, the aim of any case planning for children and young people in the statutory care system is to achieve a permanent, stable home for children. It is only through stability that children can form the attachments necessary to rebuild their lives. It is preferable that this permanent and stable home is with the child's own family whenever it is safe for the child to be at home.

To this end it is incumbent upon the department to work with families to build their capacity to parent their child at home. As such, the bill's new permanency principles provide that the first preference for achieving permanency for a child will remain for a child being cared for by their family. However, the bill also recognises that in some cases timely reunification with family will not be in the best interests of a child. In these circumstances, the bill supports early planning for alternative permanency outcomes for children and young people, including the option of a new permanent care order.

I extend my thanks to the Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee for its thorough examination of the bill and its extensive consultation, reaching Mount Isa, Palm Island and Townsville. I also want to thank all honourable members who contributed to today's debate. I also want to thank the many stakeholders who have contributed to this committee process and those who participated in the review of the Child Protection Act and the development of the bill before the House. I also thank all of the hardworking staff in my department, especially Megan Giles, Executive Director, Legislative Reform, Policy and Legislation, and of course the team in my ministerial office, especially my child safety adviser, Shane Bevis. I commend the bill to the House.