




Speech By  
**Barry O'Rourke**

**MEMBER FOR ROCKHAMPTON**

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**NATIONAL REDRESS SCHEME FOR INSTITUTIONAL CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE  
(COMMONWEALTH POWERS) BILL**

 **Mr O'ROURKE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (2.07 pm): I rise to speak in support of the National Redress Scheme for Institutional Child Sexual Abuse (Commonwealth Powers) Bill 2018. The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse's *Redress and civil litigation report* was released on 14 September 2015. The report recommended the establishment of a single national redress scheme to provide eligible applicants with three elements of redress: a monetary payment, access to counselling and a direct personal response from responsible institutions.

Under the national scheme, applications will be received and assessed by the national scheme operator. The Queensland government central contact point will be established in the Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women. It is expected that the national scheme operator may request from participating institutions information that may be relevant to assessing applicants when an applicant has identified the institution as being involved in the abuse, the operator reasonably believes the institution may be responsible for the abuse or the operator has reasonable grounds to believe that the participating institution has information that may be relevant to determining the application.

As an institution participating in the national scheme, the Queensland government may be required to provide information to the national scheme operator. In order to streamline the administration of the national scheme, the Queensland government has established a central contact point to facilitate communication between all Queensland government agencies and the operator.

This bill will facilitate appropriate information sharing by empowering the chief executive of the Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women to request and receive relevant information from other state agencies to provide to the national scheme operator, enabling the chief executive of the Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women to give information to a state agency for the purpose of assisting compliance with a request made by the national scheme operator and clarifying that participating state institutions may give information to the national scheme operator for the purpose of complying with a request for information under the national scheme.

The bill will also ensure that redress payments may not be deducted from victim assistance payments by amending the Victims of Crime Assistance Act 2009 to provide that redress payments under the national scheme are not relevant payments.

Participation in the national scheme will have significant resource implications for the Queensland government. The Queensland government has committed \$500 million for the purpose of providing redress payments to people who have experienced child sexual abuse in institutions run by the Queensland government. Additional costs will also be incurred by the Queensland government in operationalising the national scheme and performing associated functions.

All recommendations of the royal commission, including the recommendations regarding a national redress scheme, were informed by the royal commission's extensive consultation with stakeholders. The Queensland government has also conducted a series of meetings and round tables

with key stakeholders to inform its response to the reports of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, including the recommendations related to the national redress scheme.

I would also like to thank the other members of the committee and also the secretariat and staff for the work they have done with this bill. I commend the bill to the House.