




Speech By  
**Daniel Purdie**

**MEMBER FOR NINDERRY**

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## **DISABILITY SERVICES AND OTHER LEGISLATION (NDIS) AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mr PURDIE** (Ninderry—LNP) (4.31 pm): I also rise this afternoon to speak on the Disability Services and Other Legislation (NDIS) Amendment Bill 2019 which was introduced on 28 March 2019 by the Minister for Communities and Minister for Disability Services and Seniors and referred to the Education, Employment and Small Business Committee.

In 2015 the ABS reported that approximately 18 per cent of Queensland's population were living with a disability. That is almost one in five Queenslanders. It is estimated that over 261,000 Queenslanders across all age groups have a profound and severe disability. People with a profound and severe disability require assistance in everyday activities including self-care, health care, mobility and communication.

The need to support people with disabilities is growing more than ever before. In 2017 Carers Queensland estimated that over the next 10 years the demand for informal and unpaid care will exceed supply, as the rate of people with a severe and profound disability is growing faster than the number of family and friend carers. That is why the delivery of a sound and effective National Disability Insurance Scheme is so important.

As this bill progresses through parliament we will again today provide bipartisan support for these fundamental changes to ensure that the necessary legislative framework is in place for Queensland to become a participating jurisdiction within the national NDIS framework. The national NDIS commission will continue to register NDIS providers and apply its monitoring, enforcement and complaint processes. Queenslanders will remain responsible for some components of the NDIS quality and safeguard framework such as the worker and volunteer screening system, authorising the use of restrictive practices and operating a community visitor function—components which further enhance the safety and security of one of our most vulnerable populations.

This bill progresses changes to include a new range of offences which will automatically disqualify people from holding a yellow card. This is consistent with the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutionalised Responses to Child Sex Abuse. The added disqualifying offences for yellow cards will include kidnapping of a child, kidnapping for ransom of a child, child stealing, abduction of a child under 16 and bestiality. The bill includes changes to terminology in order to ensure that the Community Visitor Program and coronial inquests into deaths in care add further protections for people receiving high-level care from NDIS providers. It also amends several other acts which will help ensure that information can be shared for the purpose of enabling the NDIS commissioner, the Public Guardian and the State Coroner to perform their relevant functions.

I again note the Education, Employment and Small Business Committee's interrogation of this bill, and I support their recommendation that the bill be passed. Many people provided valuable input to this committee process. There were six stakeholder submissions received in total which offered broad support for the bill. Some raised issues about the changes to the definition of visitable sites and how

deaths in care will be reported. This key change has been included in the bill to ensure that places where community visitors visit and places where a death occurs are reported to the Queensland Police Service and the State Coroner.

While we on both sides support this bill we are disappointed in the implementation and administration of the NDIS transition process by this government. For example, during 2018-19 budget estimates questioning it was revealed that hundreds of NDIS letters were sent to deceased Queenslanders by accident. There has been a two-year gap in cabinet briefings of NDIS updates. We are also concerned about the reports of transition issues that have resulted in people being at risk of homelessness due to not being able to secure NDIS or state funding in time. As well, some services are no longer being funded.

This government previously decided to axe the Taxi Subsidy Scheme on 30 June, and it was only due to public outcry and pressure from the opposition that they reversed this decision and reinstated it for another 12 months. In the meantime, other states were delaying cuts to their travel subsidy programs in order to provide a smoother transition to NDIS for people with disabilities. Why? Because other states know that helping vulnerable people transition smoothly to a new program is the right thing to do. At least those state governments recognised that people with disabilities often have increased care needs. This means that they may have to regularly travel to medical appointments, and removing such a subsidy would create a financial barrier to health care access. However, this government did not recognise that. They threatened people's independence and created unnecessary worry for many people.

We on this side have a strong history of delivering better outcomes for Queenslanders with disabilities. I would like to see this government take a more proactive approach to the administrative of this bill as well as actions required of them within the NDIS transition process. It is important to create effective legislation; however, if this government cannot implement this legislation effectively and efficiently then they could be causing more harm than good. For many years people with disabilities wanted a system that provides access to services centred on their needs and which enables them to have a better quality of life, more independence, and choice over which supports and services they want to use. We should let them have it.

In closing, I want to give a quick shout-out to a local not-for-profit group in my electorate, Coolum HeARTS, which was started by Clive and Barb Holden many years ago in their own home. They now have a local shed at Coolum where they provide valuable services to those less fortunate in my community with mental and physical disabilities. The services they provide allow vulnerable persons in my community to access the arts. They have singing programs, art classes, clay modelling and a drumming session which I was lucky to attend a Friday or two ago. I was able to give them the good news that they had received \$7,000 as part of the recent gambling fund grants, and that went over well. That is one short example of a group in my electorate which will benefit greatly from this bill.