




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR OODGEROO

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DISABILITY SERVICES AND OTHER LEGISLATION (NDIS) AMENDMENT BILL

 **Dr ROBINSON** (Oodgeroo—LNP) (3.50 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the debate on the Disability Services and Other Legislation (NDIS) Amendment Bill. This is important legislation for those whose lives are touched by disability. In my electorate of Oodgeroo many people in the Cleveland district are directly impacted by a disability and there are many agencies, organisations, carers, volunteers and families who are involved in supporting and assisting those with a disability. This legislation is not only important to those who are directly affected by disability but also important to all of us if we want a caring and inclusive society that cares for the most needy and vulnerable. As we on this side of the House do care, the LNP has contributed to this bill in a bipartisan manner so that the legislation deals with the immediate issues before us in the most effective way and we will not be opposing the bill.

The bill is important because it ensures that Queensland has made all the required critical and urgent amendments to support the commencement of the operation of the NDIS commission from 1 July 2019. It also provides a strong quality and safeguards framework, particularly in regard to the authorisation of restrictive practices and worker screening, so that the Disability Services Act 2006 operates in conjunction with the Commonwealth legislative framework. It also ensures that existing quality and safeguards under the Disability Services Act continue to apply to disability services currently regulated under the Disability Services Act that will be outside of the NDIS.


Further, it strengthens the operation of Queensland's disability worker screening system, the yellow card system, during the transition to new NDIS worker screening. The bill is important in that it ensures that the deaths of certain NDIS participants continue to be reported to the State Coroner by amending the Coroners Act 2003. It also ensures that community visitors continue with visitable sites where certain NDIS participants are in order to protect the participant's rights and interests by amending the Public Guardian Act 2014. The bill is important because it assists with the performance of the NDIS commission's functions under the NDIS Act by enabling appropriate information sharing to occur with the NDIS commission.

The Education, Employment and Small Business Committee recommended that the bill be passed. There were six stakeholder submissions received and there was broad support for the bill. Some issues were raised regarding changes to the definition of 'visitable site' and how deaths in care are recorded. The Queensland Disability Network and the Public Advocate raised concerns. Some of those concerns have been well considered in the House so I will not go over that material. The Office of the Public Guardian also argued that the placement of the new definition within the main body of the act may limit flexibility to change. Again, that has been well considered and I will not make any further comment on that. Concerns were also raised about the narrowing of the definition of when a death is a death in care. That has also been well covered in the debate.

This bill is a necessary and sensible next step in our transition to the NDIS. We must ensure that no Queenslanders living with a disability is worse off during this transition to the NDIS. On several occasions in the Redlands service providers have expressed their concerns about the transition. They

are concerned that, in cases where they offered many services and were, in essence, in some ways a one-stop shop or provider for many functions, with the freedom to shop around clients may not choose to use all of their services and they may have to reduce services if they cannot fund them. This is a very real concern and I get it. On numerous occasions individuals with disability or family members on their behalf have raised with me their fear that their package may not go as far under the new system as under the old. Again, I get that very real concern. This bill should help to ensure that Queensland's accountability frameworks remain in place as the transition continues and such issues can be dealt with.

To the best of my ability I will be watching that between the state and federal governments those locals with disabilities and their families are not worse off and that providers are not worse off. It is sad to say that the Palaszczuk Labor government has at times put Queenslanders living with disabilities at risk: reports of hundreds of NDIS letters being sent to deceased Queenslanders; a two-year gap in cabinet briefings of any NDIS updates; people being at risk of homelessness due to being unable to access funding in a timely manner; and services such as the Queensland Narrating Service no longer being funded and being at risk of closure. These issues are concerning and we will continue to provide scrutiny at a state level.

 **Dr ROBINSON** (Oodgeroo—LNP) (3.57 pm), continuing: The Treasurer also decided to prematurely cut the Taxi Subsidy Scheme making it the only state to do so at that time. She was dragged into reversing her mean-spirited decision last minute and to extend the TSS for 12 months after the LNP and disability organisations embarrassed her into a backflip.

In conclusion, I thank the disability groups that operate in the Redlands coast area, big and small, for the work that they do, groups such as Phoenix Lifestyle, Connect Two Group, Star Community Services with transport and other areas, Myhorizon and Anglicare, just to name a few. There are many more that I could name. I thank them for all that they do to serve the needy and the vulnerable in the Redlands coast.