

DANGEROUS SEXUAL OFFENDER — RELEASE

446. Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP to the Minister for Child Protection:

I refer to the judgement in relation to the release of DAL and the department for child protection and family support's opposition to his release. Does the minister agree with the views of her agency; and, if so, what action has the minister taken with the Attorney General to ensure that DAL is not released in and around the vicinity of children?

Ms S.F. McGURK replied:

I do not have any comments to make about the release of DAL because it is a matter before the courts and a matter that is being dealt with by the Attorney General. I think the issue being debated in this house is an important one; that is, last year this Parliament had an opportunity to strengthen the rules around the release of sex offenders. I understand that the member was not here, but his side of the chamber made a decision about that. Now, under the leadership of the Attorney General, new legislation has been brought to this Parliament to try to strengthen those provisions; to say to the courts very clearly that the onus of proof needs to be on whether the person has demonstrated that they are not going to reoffend. We need to do everything that we can to make sure that the community is safe and has assurances in relation to the release of those offenders. I have confidence in the Attorney General, with his experience and his passion on this particular issue —

Mr C.J. Barnett interjected.

Ms S.F. McGURK: He is the person, not the former leader of the Liberal Party or the former Attorney General sitting in the other house, who I think did very little to progress the safety of our community. I have confidence in the Attorney General and I thank him for his leadership on this matter.