

**CHILDREN AND COMMUNITY SERVICES LEGISLATION AMENDMENT AND REPEAL BILL
2014**

Third Reading

MS A.R. MITCHELL (Kingsley — Parliamentary Secretary) [7.01 pm]: I move —

That the bill be now read a third time.

DR A.D. BUTI (Armadale) [7.01 pm]: I have a few comments about the Children and Community Services Legislation Amendment and Repeal Bill 2014. As all Labor Party speakers have stated, the opposition supports the bill. It has appropriately taken into account the statutory review of the original 2004 bill. I have a couple of concluding comments. Although the legislation before us is good, the issue of child welfare is very problematic. It is sad that we even have to have legislation to deal with child welfare, but that is the way society is. Some children cannot be catered for by their parents or certain parameters have to be put in place for parents to be responsible. We may have the best legislation to govern how the practices should occur, but of course resources need to be in place. As we all know, the people who work in the Department for Child Protection and Family Support work under incredible stress. Governments have to be mindful that the department is properly resourced because good legislation on its own will not be sufficient to provide the necessary protection for children in need.

I raised the issue of confidentiality during my contribution to the second reading and during consideration in detail. I have written to the Minister for Child Protection about members being able to write to the minister about sensitive child welfare matters. One would hope that when we do that, it is not relayed to third parties. In a particular case regarding one family, I wrote to the minister seeking information. I was told that I could not have the information because it would breach confidentiality, but then the department—it was not the minister; it was the Department for Child Protection and Family Support—breached confidentiality by identifying me as the author of a number of letters written to the minister. One of the third parties has basically blamed me for children being taken away from her care. Anyhow, that is now in the minister's court. I am sure she will address it in an appropriate manner.

Ms R. Saffioti: Did that really happen?

Dr A.D. BUTI: Yes. It is absolutely amazing. I cannot believe it. A director of the department identified me as the author of a few letters.

I would like to compliment the parliamentary secretary for her carriage of this bill. She has, as always, appropriately dealt with the legislation before this house. I am sure it will be nice to send something upstairs so that the other place has a bit of work to do.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.