

DISABILITY SUPPORT ACCOMMODATION, "IDENTIFYING THE NEED" REPORT

**912. Mr OMODEI to the Minister for Disability Services:**

I refer to the "Identifying the Need" report into disability support accommodation, commissioned by the minister in June 2001.

- (1) Can the minister confirm that 238 applications made by those in critical need of support accommodation were rejected in 2001-02?
- (2) Given that responsibility for the majority of the funding for support accommodation lies with the State Government, has the minister made a budget submission to the Treasurer for a real increase in disability support accommodation funding?

**Ms McHALE replied:**

- (1)-(2) I thank the member for his question. I also thank him, the Leader of the Opposition and other members on both sides of the House who attended the rally at lunchtime. The member for Warren-Blackwood listened to what all the speakers had to say. I recognise also families in the public gallery who were there for the rally, and welcome them to the Parliament.

At the rally I outlined what the State Government was doing to address what is recognised by all parties to be a long-term issue. I outlined to the families a number of key issues. I will boil them down to two in order to respond to the member's question. The disability sector has two broad requests: one is that there be a recognition of the unmet need and that it be built into the budget process, and the other is that the disability sector wants an approach to the issue which for the first time sets out a long-term plan for meeting unmet need.

I want to recognise the member for Warren-Blackwood's involvement in the disability sector when he was a minister in the former Government. It is recognised that we had a bipartisan approach to disability. We are continuing with that. As to whether I have put in a submission -

Mr Omodei: For a real increase.

Ms McHALE: I was giving a shorthand paraphrase of what the member was saying. I told the rally at lunchtime that on every occasion in Cabinet and at every other opportunity, I feed to cabinet ministers, the Treasurer and Premier the extent of the unmet need and the views of the disability sector. I told the rally that I know that cabinet ministers and the Premier recognise the message that is coming from the disability sector. We recognise that looking after family members with disabilities is a very emotional and tiring occupation that needs support. I ask members to wait for the budget to see what we will deliver.

Mr Omodei: Have you made a submission?

Ms McHALE: I have just told the member that -

Mr Omodei: Why don't you answer yes?

Ms McHALE: Obviously the member is not listening to what I am saying. On every occasion that I have made submissions, this Government, as it did in its last budget, has made real increases and provided for real increase in growth. We will continue that commitment. Long-term planning is essential. We have set up the mechanism for that, and we will deliver.