

**GARTH MURPHY**

*Petition*

Mr P.D. Omodei presented the following petition bearing the signature of one person -

To the Honourable the Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled.

We, the undersigned, bring to your attention the situation of Garth Murphy and his family.

Garth is a 26 year old gentleman who has Downs Syndrome. He lives at home with his parents in Rockingham.

Garth works at Activ Industries in Fremantle five days a week, which he really enjoys. However, in order for him to have this valuable job, he has to be driven 40 kilometres a day, leaving home at 7.20 am and returning at 5.30 pm. His mother drives him from Rockingham to Cockburn House (a respite facility in Cockburn) each morning on her way to work. Garth waits there until he is picked up by the Activ bus and taken to work. In the afternoon the arrangements are reversed. He has to wait at Cockburn House for his mother to finish work before he can return home. If his mother is sick, then he has to stay at home as well, which he finds upsetting.

This makes a very long and tiring day for Garth. He is exhausted by the time he gets home. This in turn places limits on the social activities he can pursue. He needs to live closer to his place of work both because it is too long a workday for him and because he is not getting the opportunity for the social interaction with his peers that he needs. His family has tried alternative employment closer to home but due to the lack of support Garth needs, this was not successful.

Garth is able to socialise on the weekends. He enjoys an adult group that meets on alternate weekends. They go on outings to places like the Trots, or the Casino. Garth thinks it's great to come home late at night and take himself off to bed without his parents telling him to go. He is a typical young man. He likes his own space and doesn't like to go everywhere with his parents.

Garth has reached the stage where he needs, and wants, to leave home. Since his birth his parents have encouraged him to achieve to the best of his ability and to be as independent as possible. Now that he is an adult he needs to leave the family home to continue this development towards independence. He has two sisters who have left home and made a life for themselves, with support of their family. Why can't Garth have this same right?

The family have applied for accommodation support funding for Garth ELEVEN times. They received the latest rejection for their son last week. They have been applying for two and a half years. Garth's parents are getting older (they are in their fifties) and want to see their son settled in supported accommodation. They would like to retire knowing that he was happy in his own home and living closer to his place of work with more opportunities to socialise with his peers. They want their daughters to be part of Garth's life, but not to have the full time care of him if anything were to happen to them.

*Now we ask that the Legislative Assembly give urgent attention to:*

*The provision of the accommodation support services needed by the estimated 300 people with disabilities and their families in Western Australia currently unable to access the accommodation support they need.*

*The provision of the respite services needed by the estimated 950 people with disabilities and their families in Western Australia currently unable to access the respite they need.*

*The provision of the "Post School Option" services needed by the estimated 800 people with disabilities in Western Australia currently unable to access the support they need to engage in activities during the day.*

[See petition No 231.]