



Pru Goward

Minister for Family and Community Services

Minister for Social Housing

Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault

MEDIA RELEASE

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PARLIAMENT PASSES CHILD PROTECTION BILL: FINALLY A FOREVER HOME FOR KIDS IN FOSTER CARE

The NSW Government has continued its commitment to transform the child protection system, passing significant child protection reforms which streamline the court process for permanency, including restoration, guardianship and open adoption.

Minister for Family and Community Services Pru Goward said children who cannot live safely with their parents will no longer languish in the foster care system, despite opposition and fearmongering by members of Labor and the Greens.

“When I embarked on this reform journey more than seven years ago, I wanted to ensure the days of children spending years and years in care would be over,” Ms Goward said.

“I am so proud to say the NSW Government today passed a landmark reform Bill that will achieve just that. No longer will children languish in care for more than 12 years.

“Sadly, there will always be children who are unable to enjoy a secure upbringing with their parents, despite efforts to help them change. Those children deserve to grow up in protective and permanent homes with adults who love them and care for them.”

Twenty-three-year-old Bobby Hendry spent 13 years in foster care, moving between multiple placements and 38 different homes.

“Now that I’m an adult, I can see clearly how a childhood of displacement and uncertainty has affected me,” Ms Hendry said.

“I felt like I moved so frequently that there was no point unpacking my bag - I constantly lived with the fear of being a burden again.”

Ms Goward said successful amendments to the Care and Protection Act will give families a better opportunity to resolve child protection concerns and keep their children safely at home.

“We know children do best when they have safety, security and a sense of belonging,” Ms Goward said.

“Our current reforms have resulted in a decrease in the number of children entering care by 44 per cent over the past two years and the number of children in care is falling.

“Families will now be offered Alternative Dispute Resolution such as Family Group Conferencing to resolve concerns and keep families together before the issue moves to the courts.

“We are committed to keeping families together and we will continue to do everything we can to ensure that families have every opportunity to get the help they need to thrive.”

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