



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**Main Committee**

**CARER RECOGNITION BILL 2010**

**Second Reading**

**SPEECH**

**Thursday, 21 October 2010**

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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## SPEECH

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<b>Questioner</b>		<b>Responder</b>	
<b>Speaker</b>	Georganas, Steve, MP	<b>Question No.</b>	

**Mr GEORGANAS** (Hindmarsh) (12.20 pm)—I too rise in support of the Carer Recognition Bill 2010. In this bill we recognise: people's love and dedication for their loved ones; people's desires to see their family members live as normal a life as possible; people's commitment to their parents, their spouse, their children, their brothers and sisters; and people's loving sacrifice of time, energy and a large part of their own lives to the health and happiness of those for whom they care.

In our electorates we all hear stories of people who put their lives on hold to work very hard in the home, caring for their loved ones—these are stories of unswerving dedication, acute expressions of love. Some stories we hear are absolutely jaw-dropping. In some instances, such stories are almost painful to hear and bring a tear to the eyes of all of us. But mostly such stories show the dedication and the work—performed day in, day out, year after year—which is nothing short of awesome, and it is inspirational to many people.

It is always sad to learn of the condition of a person who requires care, whether the person is aged, in ill-health, suffering a progressive disease or mentally ill. Many of us empathise with the person requiring care and feel for his or her loss or absence of independence. It can be very sad to see people in need of care. This may especially be the case where memories are fresh of a strong, independent person whose life is now a shadow of what it was in his or her prime.

There are also the young—the children, who through no fault of their own have happened upon circumstances which severely limit their life options, their ability to grow as a person, the possibility of a long and healthy life. The loss or absence of what most of us take for granted can be sad. I believe when we consider carers—what they do and how they must approach their work—we should consider how they too suffer pain in seeing their loved ones suffer.

Carers endure the work itself—sometimes thankless work, even dangerous work at some points. But, as if that were not enough, they may also have to endure the slow slipping away of their loved one over many years. Such an experience could be the worst that anyone anywhere might endure. I am sure we have all had contact with carers in our electorates. We have heard heart-wrenching stories of painful experiences that last for years and we are all amazed at the resilience of these carers. We stand in full admiration of carers' commitment to their loved ones.

Nothing could be more appropriate than this parliament—and governments and councils across the land—expressing its support for those who deliver so much support themselves. Nothing could be more just than recognising and supporting the work and sacrifices made by carers. There has been some recognition of carers and some support for them in the work they do. Some of this recognition has been introduced by the current government and is inherently positive, and this is very good. But I believe nothing can surmount what many carers go through. Nothing will outweigh the pain and heartache of loving a family member who has always loved you but now does not even know your name. That is why this bill is extremely important. I support the bill and commend it to the House.