



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**Federation Chamber**

**CONSTITUENCY STATEMENTS**

**Child Care**

**SPEECH**

**Wednesday, 20 November 2013**

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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## SPEECH

<b>Date</b>	Wednesday, 20 November 2013	<b>Source</b>	House
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<b>Questioner</b>		<b>Responder</b>	
<b>Speaker</b>	Broadbent, Russell, MP	<b>Question No.</b>	

**Mr BROADBENT** (McMillan) (09:51): Deputy Speaker Scott, I would like to congratulate you on the position that you hold. You and your wife have been an adornment to this building for a long time. You are greatly honoured, and you have been a blessing. I congratulate you. It is a fitting response to your years in this parliament.

Having said that, I have been nice to the men in this place for too long. I am now appealing to the women, because I have given up on the men. The reason I have given up on the men is that, for the last 30 years, there has been an inappropriate approach to child care in the bush. Recently, Kilmany Uniting Care, who are the welfare arm of the Uniting Church, have said that, as of February, because it is unviable, they will not be providing child care in four centres across Gippsland and McMillan. None of the models that we have for child care in the bush go. In larger regional centres, places like outer Melbourne, where I am, they work, and they work very well. They benefit the child and the family. That is all good. But, in the bush, we have just seen that four centres are unviable; they are losing money. One was a result of a promise of the previous Labor government. I greatly appreciated that they put that centre into one of the areas. That is now closed—that beautiful building, providing absolutely fantastic opportunities.

I appeal to the women of this place. Do you know why kids get killed on farms? Because they are being babysat in the workplace. There is not one building site in the city on which any female member of the House in this room tonight would allow a child to be babysat. Just as many difficulties exist on farms as far as danger in the workplace. That is why kids get killed on farms—because mum is in the shed looking after the kids, and dad says, 'I'll take the baby on the tractor; she'll be right.' Well, she is not right.

We have to look at new, flexible, ways. I know it is a big ask, but there has to be flexible childcare for the bush. Why hasn't somebody said, 'Yes, the bush is important'? Women in the bush are important. Small business in the bush are important. I have heard some great things from members this morning, but I do not hear anybody talking about child care as it affects the bush. There was a whole conference this morning on child care. Not one of them was providing a service but they are all doing some research. Did any of them mention the bush? No. It is only about child care for those that live in the centres, where they can get access to that type of child care. I appeal to the women of this building: in your deliberations, think about women and child care in the bush.