



Barry O'Farrell MP

NSW Opposition Leader

Shadow Minister for Western Sydney

MEDIA RELEASE

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NSW Liberals & Nationals to Introduce Carers Recognition Bill

The NSW Liberals & Nationals today announced they will introduce the NSW Carers Recognition Bill 2010 into the NSW Parliament in the upcoming Parliamentary session commencing on Tuesday and also launched an online campaign through the Caring4carers.com.au website urging carers to sign a petition calling for the NSW Labor Government to support the Bill.

“For too long the NSW State Labor Government has failed to recognise the wonderful support and work undertaken by carers in the community,” Leader of the NSW Liberals and Nationals Mr O’Farrell said today.

“The NSW Liberals & Nationals endorse the vision of Carers NSW that caring should be accepted as a shared community responsibility and all carers in NSW should be recognised, valued and supported by the community and by governments.

“Yet all too often carers suffer in silence as they deal with the challenges of caring for a person who needs full time support,” Mr O’Farrell said.

The NSW Liberals & Nationals have taken a positive step forward by introducing legislation to better support the 750,000 carers in NSW.

“As a community we must recognise and better support the work that carers do,” he said.

According to Carers NSW carers save taxpayers an estimated \$10 billion annually (the cost of replacing carers providing informal care with paid care workers) and by assisting people to remain living in the community for longer they also make substantial savings on early admission to costly supported accommodation.

“Many carers experience poor health and social disadvantage as a result of the enormous work that they undertake, yet their contribution all too often goes unrecognised by the NSW Government,” Shadow Minister for Disability Services and Ageing Andrew Constance said.

“The NSW State Labor Government faces an ongoing challenge to ensure that suitable support is available to help carers to continue to provide care, particularly with the ageing of many carers,” he said.

The NSW Carers Recognition Bill 2010 is designed to enact a NSW Carers Charter and establish the NSW Ministerial Advisory Council for Carers, which is to be co-chaired by the relevant Ministers responsible for carers and its membership is to be a majority of carers. The Bill brings NSW inline with other Australian jurisdictions including WA, SA, NT, Qld and ACT, which have a similar legislative framework.

“This legislation will recognise the valuable contribution of carers to our society and the benefit, including the social and economic benefit, provided by carers to the community,” Mr Constance said.

“The legislation will also provide through a carers assessment for the interests, needs and choices of carers to be considered in decisions about the provision of services that impact on their role,” he said.

“The challenge to the NSW Labor Government is to back our bill in a bipartisan way in the best interests of carers,” Mr Kevin Humphries Shadow Mental Health said.

“We are urging carers to go online to our website Caring4carers.com.au and sign the online petition to pressure the Labor Government to support the bill,” he said.

Media Comments Andrew Constance 0439 311073, Kevin Humphries 0428120006