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MEDIA RELEASE

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Families SA Protest Rally

Ann Bressington, Independent MLC, will tomorrow be holding a protest rally for those who have been adversely affected by Families SA's systemic dysfunction.

"The state's child protection agency Families SA has a long and established history of failing families in SA," Ann Bressington said.

"Almost every Minister has failed to take the Department's bureaucrats to task. Each has defended the bad practices of social workers within the department, who are typically unable to account for their assessments, decisions & actions.

"Families SA, still has a 'rotten culture' where social workers run rough-shod over people's lives, often based on rumour, and rarely in compliance with Families SA's policies and procedure or the Children's Protection Act, resulting in:

- *Children remaining with abusive and neglectful parents.*
- *Children being removed from loving homes, often on false allegations or when minimal family support was needed.*
- *Grandparents and other relatives are denied the right to care for children removed.*
- *Foster parents are given no avenue for review or appeal when a child has been wrongfully or questionably removed from their care.*

The rally is being held on Wednesday 17th March, 2010, in the South West corner of Hindmarsh Square at 1 pm after which the gathering will march along the Pirie Street footpath to Minister Jennifer Rankine's office.

"This as the last opportunity to make Families SA an election issue. The complaints of families and carers have gone unaddressed and unheard for far too long," Ann Bressington said.

For further information, please contact Ann Bressington directly on 0448 887 277

"If the nation had deliberately designed a system that would frustrate the professionals who staff it, anger the public who finance it, and abandon the children who depend on it, it could not have done a better job than the present child-welfare system... Marginal changes will not turn this system around."

[Taken from the 1991 US National Commission on Children, about the state of child protection]