



**Hon Ann Bressington MLC**

Parliament House  
North Terrace  
ADELAIDE SA 5000  
Phone: 08 8237 9541  
Fax: 08 8237 9534

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**Friday, 3 August 2007**

# **GOVERNMENT CLAWS BACK RESOURCES FROM DISABLED**

Thousands of South Australians living with a disability and their families are worse off now than two years ago due to grossly under-funded services, and now cuts of \$750,000 to non-government organisations providing vital advocacy and support services threaten to worsen the situation even further.

This was the message which emerged from a public meeting “Lip Service: Disabling the Disabled” hosted by The Hon Ann Bressington MLC, Leader of the Opposition in Legislative Council, The Hon David Ridgway, and The Hon Stephen Wade MLC, held at Parliament House last Wednesday night.

Ms Bressington said the \$9 million increase announced by the government in 2005 was clearly inadequate and more than \$15 million short of what was needed at the time.

“The Treasurer himself admitted at that time that the small increase was “not enough and more needs to be done” (ABC Radio, 27/05/05),” Ms Bressington said.

“I am appalled that only two years ago the government portrayed itself as the champion and underdog of those struggling to cope with a disability, yet in no time at all has started the claw-back of those funds, which many had hoped would have gradually increased over the past two years,” Ms Bressington said.

“We have 10,000 new public service positions, while those struggling to cope with a disability are told they must get on with their lives and accept that they will continue to receive nothing.”

The major areas of concern to emerge from the meeting were the pressing need for:

- supported accommodation,
- flexible respite options,
- early intervention programs to minimise the impact of regressive or degenerative disabilities,
- transport and
- post-school options.

Spokesperson for Dignity for the Disabled, Mr David Holst, said “We are very disappointed that despite having our hopes raised, neither the provision of essential funding or services has made a serious dent in what is required. There is overwhelming evidence that there is great despair in the disability sector because long standing service provision issues have not been resolved and it is only getting worse. This initiative being led by Ann but supported by other MLC’s is an important step in highlighting the chronic unmet need levels in SA.”