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MEDIA RELEASE

Friday, 9 November 2007

RUDDOCK HAS AN “OPEN MIND” FOR USE OF POLYGRAPHS.

Independent MLC Ann Bressington met with Federal Attorney General Phillip Ruddock and Member for Wakefield David Fawcett on Thursday to discuss the use of polygraph testing in Family Law Court to achieve “zero tolerance of false allegations”.

“Mr. Ruddock stated at the meeting that the AFP provided information that polygraph testing shows an accuracy level of 80% and that he has an ‘open mind’ in the application of polygraph testing,” Ms Bressington said.

“The organisations represented were asked by Mr. Ruddock to prepare a submission which will not be difficult as we have all worked very hard to gather the appropriate data over the past 9 months.”

The groups represented asked Mr. Ruddock to seek approval for polygraph testing to:

- be admissible as evidence in family court proceedings.
- be approved for legal aid funding.

“The meeting was organized by Mr Fawcett to discuss the efficacy of using polygraphs because for 18 months I have been pushing the issue of family law reform and child protection reforms,” Ms Bressington said.

Members of the groups pointed out to Mr. Ruddock that 25% of Family court matters are based on false allegations and that often decisions made by child support agencies are biased because of the fact that child abuse is such an emotive issue, not to mention the financial burden this places on the taxpayer funded justice system. They also stated that they would expect that if there is technology available that could assist in providing justice then it needs to be implemented to put a stop to the damage happening to our children, parents and families.

Ms Bressington has been overwhelmed by the support for her polygraph lobbying. Since the idea was flagged three months ago Ann’s office has received over 7,000 contacts with only 1% of respondents being critical of the idea.

Ms Bressington believes polygraph testing would have a significant impact in reducing the destruction of the family unit. To Australia’s shame every two minutes there is a report of abuse, neglect or death of a child.

This Saturday Ms Bressington will be attending the “WHAT IS HAPPENING TO OUR CHILDREN” mass media event in Sydney which is part of a national lobby campaign to put Family Law and child protection on the agenda for the federal election.

Groups represented at the meeting were:

Lone Fathers Association Australia.

Shared Parenting Council Australia.

Fathers 4 Equality.

BraveHeart Qld.

Richard Hillman Foundation

Woman's Migrant Support Services

Freda Briggs Centre

Family Law Action Group of South Australia

Children Deserve More

Men's Information Services.

Joint Parenting Association.

Citizens Against False Allegations.

Fatherhood Association.

Migrant Women's Support Accommodation Services Inc.

Save Our State

Men's rights Association Qld.

Child Support Action Group

Careworker's Coalition.