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Dr Rosalie Woodruff MP

Leader of the Tasmanian Greens

30 SEP 2026

By email: haprocedure@parliament.tas.gov.au

Dear Dr Woodruff, *Rosalie*

Constituency Question – Forced Adoption Redress Scheme

Thank you for your question in Parliament on 9 September 2026 on behalf of a constituent requesting information about the Historical Forced Adoptions Redress Scheme.

Question

A question from my constituent, Kate. The forced adoption of children in Tasmania harmed two people - the mother and the child. The formal parliamentary apology that was made in 2012 rightly acknowledged the shared harm of this shameful government practice. The Government acknowledges child adoptees were harmed and suffer lifelong grief, identity loss and unanswered questions. However, while the scheme provides real and meaningful recognition for mothers, justice remains unfinished, because children were excluded.

Your consultation on the redress had feedback from 97 mothers and 38 adoptees. Kate has been in contact with your office to seek an explanation as to why adult adoptees were ultimately excluded from the redress scheme, but she has yet to receive a reply. Attorney-General, will you explain why adoptees were excluded from the scheme? Will you meet directly with Kate and other adult adoptees to hear their stories and experiences?

Response

The Scheme has been developed with a specific focus on mothers who were subjected to historic forced adoption practices which occurred in Tasmania up until 1988. It is intended to respond to the experiences of mothers who had to live through forced adoption practices, which resulted in profound and lasting harm to mothers through the removal of their babies.

The creation of this redress scheme was a significant decision of government to assist affected mothers. This focus reflects the purpose of the Scheme and is not intended to compare experiences or diminish the impact on others affected by adoptions.

I recognise that these practices have caused enduring hurt and trauma to many people, including those who were adopted. The Tasmanian Government acknowledges that adopted people and their families may have been deeply affected, including through experiences of grief, loss of identity, disconnection and trauma.

Expanding the focus of the scheme from mothers who were subject to historic forced adoption practices to also include adoptees would require a substantial re-design and reconsideration of the parameters of the scheme and the eligibility criteria, including the period of time which would be covered by redress and whether it would cover all adopted persons or only persons adopted in specific circumstances.

The Tasmanian Government received feedback from a broad range of community members, including adoptees, as part of the consultation process. Feedback was provided in the form of survey responses, online submissions, phone calls and emails. My Department also met in person with some members of the community to receive their feedback, given the sensitivity of the issues.

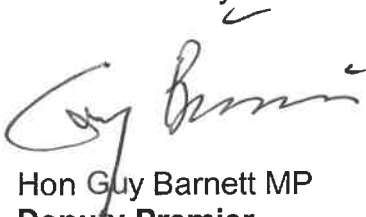
I can assure you that the Government considered this feedback when determining the scope and parameters of the Scheme. The decision to focus on the historical injustice caused to mothers was not to diminish adopted children's experiences which were broad and diverse.

I note the Tasmanian Parliament Apology to people hurt by past forced adoption practices acknowledged and recognised, on behalf of the Tasmanian Government, the experiences of all those affected by historical forced adoption, including adoptees, siblings and other family members.

Adoptees and other family members affected by historical forced adoption practices can access counselling, assistance with historical records tracing and family reconnection services through Relationships Australia.

I have personally met with many people affected by historical forced adoption practices and have heard directly about the significant and enduring impacts these experiences have had on their lives. I recognise the importance of listening to people with lived experience, including adult adoptees, and my door is always open to hear directly from Kate and other adopted people about their experiences and concerns.

Yours sincerely



Hon Guy Barnett MP

Deputy Premier

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