

RESPONSE TO CONSTITUENT

ASKED BY: Mr Josh Willie MP

ANSWERED BY: Minister for Disability Services

QUESTION:

Recently, in a meeting with Aurora Disability Services, you acknowledged a gap in educational funding for people living with significant and profound disabilities. Why is this cohort of people being discriminated against and what reforms are being considered to support them?

ANSWER:

Thank you for your question in Parliament on 4 November 2025, regarding educational funding for people living with significant and profound disabilities.

I would firstly like to acknowledge the wonderful work of Aurora Disability Services, an organisation that has been providing services, care and support to adults with living with disability for almost 40 years. I have had the privilege of visiting its Glenorchy premises on a few occasions, including most recently in May of this year.

I also acknowledge the continued advocacy of Aurora in seeking support for a pilot program to employ a teacher to provide literacy and numeracy education and support for people with disability.

Under my Disability Services portfolio, the Tasmanian Government provides program funding to disability organisations primarily through our contribution to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). In 2025–26, our contribution will exceed \$280 million, a portion of which is allocated to program funding for disability organisations, through the Information, Linkages and Capacity Building (ILC) program. The ILC grant process is managed by the Federal Government.

I understand Aurora Disability Services has been unsuccessful in securing funding in a number of grant rounds. I do recognise the scope of the grants program has become increasingly narrow and I have advocated to the Federal Government on several occasions for greater consideration to be given to how the grant program can best support the needs of disability organisations in their communities.

As Minister for Education, my primary responsibility is to ensure that all Tasmanian children and young people—from Kindergarten through to Year 12—have access to inclusive, equitable, and high-quality education. Our government remains strongly committed to supporting students with disability through a range of measures, including three specialist support schools that provide tailored educational environments, enabling students to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.

Addressing this matter once again as Minister for Disability Services, I am incredibly committed to creating a more inclusive and equitable Tasmania – a commitment I believe our government has demonstrated through the introduction and passing of our nation-leading *Disability Rights, Inclusion and Safeguarding Act 2024*. Through this Act, we are embedding the rights and voices of people with disability in all areas of government policy and planning. A key feature of this legislation is the development of the Tasmanian Disability Inclusion Plan, which will ensure that the lived experience of people with disability continues to inform our actions. A public consultation on the Discussion Paper has recently opened. More information can be found here:

<https://www.dpac.tas.gov.au/divisions/cpp/community-and-disability-services/tasmanian-disability-inclusion-plan-consultation>

I will continue to work with Aurora to identify any relevant grants or funding streams for the pilot program should they become available.

Yours sincerely



APPROVED/NOT APPROVED

Hon Jo Palmer MLC
Minister for Disability Services

Date 1.12.25