

NICK DAMETTO
Member for Hinchinbrook



MEDIA RELEASE

25/9/2019

Dametto calls for disability parking permit changes

A LAPSE in government legislation is preventing vision-impaired passengers from qualifying for a disability parking permit, says Hinchinbrook MP Nick Dametto.

Mr Dametto said it beggared belief that passengers with vision impairment were being prevented from gaining a parking permit because the rules governing who qualified only focused on an applicant's functional ability to walk and not other impairments.

"In my view, this is borderline discrimination and there is no reason why vision-impaired people should be excluded from holding a disability parking permit for the vehicle they are travelling in," he said.

"I raised this matter in parliament last week after being approached by Alice River couple Chayd and Hailey Brown, whose daughters Arliyah and Mackenzie are both vision impaired and legally blind.

"As one can appreciate, it is difficult for Chayd and Hailey to utilise a standard size carpark with their daughters and access to a disabled park would make their lives a little easier when going to the shops."

Mr Dametto acknowledged the "important advocacy" his parliamentary colleague and Hill MP Shane Knuth had done on the matter.

"Shane has previously put questions to Transport and Main Roads Minister Mark Bailey about this issue in parliament and has also met with the Minister to discuss the need to include vision-impairment as an eligible criteria in applying for a disability parking permit," he said.

"The KAP is united in wanting this restriction lifted."

Last July, a parliamentary e-petition called on the House to alter Queensland legislation to allow the visually impaired to obtain disability parking permits.

The e-petition attracted more than 2300 signatures and was tabled in parliament on February 12 this year.

In his response on March 14, Transport and Main Roads Minister Mark Bailey advised that as a result of a national review of Disability Parking Schemes, conducted in 2010, the Australian Disability Parking Permit Scheme currently focuses on an applicant's functional ability to walk.

NICK DAMETTO
Member for Hinchinbrook



MEDIA RELEASE

However, Mr Bailey said that he had requested the Department of Transport and Main Roads to assess the feasibility of expanding the eligibility criteria for the Disability Parking Permit Scheme in Queensland to also include people with vision impairment, with a review that was due to be finalised in mid-2019.

Mr Dametto said he would be following up with the Minister and his department on the outcome of that review.

"I will also be exploring what would be necessary to draft a potential Bill to amend existing legislation surrounding who qualifies for a disability parking permit," he said.

"I'd like to invite other members of the Hinchinbrook community who have had similar difficulties with applying for a disability parking permit to get in touch with my office so we can help highlight the issue to Mr Bailey.

"Let's make this permit system fairer."

A vision-impaired person is eligible to apply for a disability parking permit in NSW, Tasmania, the Northern Territory and the ACT.

—ENDS—

Media Enquiries

Michael Serenc – 0423 108 848