

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Legislative Scrutiny Committee](#)
Subject: Re: Reforms to Care and Protection of Children Legislation
Date: Friday, 22 May 2026 3:19:30 PM

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To Whom it may Concern,

I write as a former foster carer of remote community Aboriginal children. I have a long term involvement in the lives of three siblings. One was a formal Departmental placement (with support of family). Two were an informal, family requested arrangement. This was primarily due to family recognition of the need for the children's support for each other, on-going connection with family and community plus the long term relationship between the family and myself.

It is significant that the sibling formally in departmental care passed away prematurely at 32 years old having faced a lifetime of disrupted relationships and intense interaction with ever changing departmental workers.

Any reforms to the Care and Protection of Children Legislation must be in consultation with Aboriginal organisations and communities. I am witness to the impact of removal of children from family, culture and communities. These negative impacts could be avoided by providing support and community based alternatives such as safe houses for children in the communities to which they belong , similar to safe houses for women. I am happy to discuss this further with any review body that may explore reform options.

Child safety must be a primary focus and can best be achieved by increased support for prevention strategies that support families and prevent the need for formal intervention.

Underlying issues requiring support include:

- Adequate, well maintained housing
- Food security
- Reliable energy supplies
- Access to health care
- Access to education
- Access to employment
- Community based alternatives to jail

Community controlled services for children and their families are needed BEFORE stress points or crises arise. These need to be adequately resourced and would assist to keep families together and community life rich and fulfilling.

Thank you for the opportunity to make this submission for consideration.

Yours sincerely,

M. KAY SMITH



Alice Springs