

## **STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS**

### **Commonwealth Seniors Health Card**

Mr ROBERT (Fadden) (6.46 p.m.)—Last Wednesday, 11 June, I was pleased to attend the Runaway Bay Village at 98 Bayview Street to speak to the men and women who reside at the village, and they raised two concerns regarding the budget. Both had to do with the Commonwealth seniors health card. This government is looking to put in place an income test to include gross income from superannuation income streams from a tax source and include income that is salary sacrificed as superannuation in the income assessment. This will lead to many Commonwealth seniors health card recipients losing that card come 1 July 2009.

Losing the card, of course, means that many people will be impacted upon negatively. Currently, for prescribed pharmaceuticals, they pay \$5 per script instead of paying \$31.30. When they lose the card, of course, they will pay \$31.30 per script, up to the threshold of \$1,141.80. If they lose the card, they will also lose the seniors concession allowance and, indeed, seniors bonus payments worth \$1,000 a year. They will further lose telephone allowance and other benefits. I call on the government to remove these changes, which will impact from 1 July 2009, and also to increase the thresholds for a single to \$60,000 and for a double to \$96,000 as the thresholds have not moved since 2001. These simple amendments will certainly help the people at the Runaway Village.