

keeping Councillor Able and Councillor McLindon's promise to these residents. I assure residents, as in the case of all closures, that the Department of Housing will lead a coordinated response along with other agencies and community groups. Strategies will be developed to respond to the needs of disadvantaged and vulnerable residents. While that response may not be through long-term public housing, the aim is to locate appropriate and sustainable housing for long-term caravan park residents linking them to support services. I understand what an emotional time this is for those residents and I want them to know that we are there to support them.

University of Southern Queensland

Mr HORAN (Toowoomba South—NPA) (6.18 pm): The University of Southern Queensland has made a magnificent contribution to Toowoomba and south-west Queensland over many years. It provides about \$350 million to the local economy but, most importantly, it provides outstanding educational opportunities for the young people of our area, many of whom can stay in their home town and go to university.

The university has now undertaken a review of its courses to meet the challenges of greater demand in courses such as engineering, the new law course, education, health sciences and so on and perhaps less interest in some other courses. I believe that in putting forward this draft proposal it has made a major mistake in making the cutbacks to mathematics and statistics.

Mathematics is one of the foundations of the intellect of any university, particularly for its science courses. If there is one thing of concern to our nation today, it is the lack of mathematicians in universities and to provide teaching at our high schools as a basis for science courses and to meet the challenges that are coming in terms of new technology systems, climate change, changes in demographics, changes in computer systems and so forth.

I call on the university to reconsider this decision and to look at mathematics as providing a real marketing opportunity and a real intellectual opportunity for this university to continue to be one of the outstanding universities of Australia. At the same time I also ask it to consider the students who have enrolled. It is important that any students who have enrolled and set themselves up to do their full major course at this university should be able to do so. I am asking the university not only to keep the staff to conduct the service courses in engineering and so forth but also to provide major maths courses that can be the foundation of this university.

I would like to thank the chancellor, Bobbie Brazil, for talking and listening to me about this matter and also the acting vice-chancellor, Professor Graham Baker, for listening to what I had to say. The people who spoke to me were teachers, academics, high school students and many concerned people in Toowoomba. This is a draft proposal. I would ask the university to overturn it, particularly in the subjects of maths and statistics.

There must be genuine support for regional universities not only from the federal government, which has increased the funding provided for maths courses, but also from state governments through its education department so that we can have greater support and backup to ensure that students undertake mathematics at the university and the university is supported in providing it. I ask the university with the assistance of the state government to maintain this course as a foundation of the university.

Westside Community Services, My Life Program

Mrs ATTWOOD (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (6.21 pm): I rise to talk about an innovative program in my electorate of Mount Ommaney, the My Life program, run by Westside Community Services at Oxley. I have visited the service on many occasions at the invitation of the chairman of the board, Ernst von Haller, a strong advocate for improved services and quality of life for people with disabilities.

Westside Community Services has been providing this very successful program over the last few years at Oxley and Stones Corner and receives recurrent funding from Disability Services Queensland. It wishes to expand the program to other areas in Brisbane, starting with Chermiside and Everton Park, to make it accessible to more people with intellectual and psychiatric disabilities. There is a long waiting list for people assisted by a number of Brisbane service providers to participate in the program. Consequently, the need for this type of program is increasing.

Reports about participants of the My Life program have been extremely positive and their support service providers have noticed that their skills in many areas have improved. Of particular note is their increased self-esteem, assertiveness, effective communication, budgeting and goal-settings skills. One service provider, Micah Projects Incorporated, believes that at least half of its client group would benefit immensely from the program. Westside Employment Services's staff pick up participants from hostels and take them to the learning centre.

The program has the potential to save the government a considerable amount of funding for individual carers through providing basic life skills training. Several of the participants of the course are