



Adrian Pederick MP

Member for Hammond

House of Assembly

Thursday, 21 February 2013

MR EUGENE MCGEE

Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (11:53): I rise to support the motion by the member for Bragg that this house considers that the legal system has failed to effectively deal with the conduct of Mr Eugene McGee in relation to the death of Mr Ian Humphrey on 30 November 2003 and that public confidence in the legal system has suffered as a result; and that this house calls on the Attorney-General to exercise his powers under the Legal Practitioners Act 1931 to refer Mr McGee to the Legal Practitioners' Disciplinary Tribunal to consider whether his behaviour constitutes unprofessional or unsatisfactory conduct.

I concur with all the words that have come from this side of the house. This has been a disgraceful turn of events where someone who has a good knowledge of the law has besmirched everyone else who works in the law with their actions. To leave a man dying on the side of the road—or to leave anyone dying on the side of the road, but in this case Mr Ian Humphrey—and drive off because he is worried about the consequences is an absolute disgrace.

I think of Mrs Di Gilcrist and the suffering that she and her family have had to put up with for nearly 10 years because of this action, because of someone who was irresponsible in getting behind the wheel of a car and did not stop to render assistance. That is why more than 7,000 people have signed a petition that will be tabled today. Those people are disgusted with what has happened in the system. They are not confident that the system works and are concerned that just because someone has a vast legal knowledge they seem to be able to work their way through the system.

Many of my constituents have come to me. If they had to try to get out of any difficulties with this situation or take legal proceedings to protect themselves in this situation, if they were silly enough to do the same action as Mr McGee, they would have to spend hundreds of thousands of dollars to get the same level of defence and they are just not capable of doing it, and they still possibly would not be able to get the same advice.

I concur with all the words on this side of the chamber and it is time the government and the Attorney-General got on board and did something about this matter so that the people of this state can see that justice is done. I note quoted on FIVEaa only this morning the statistic from the Australian Bureau of Statistics that 40 per cent of Australians are concerned with sentencing outcomes. Well, you wonder why when you see people who get very lenient sentencing or do not get any effective outcomes at all as far as what should happen to them because of a criminal offence. I support this motion and I call on other members of this house to give it the support it deserves. It is a disgrace that it has gone on this long and the government should take every effort to make sure that justice is done.

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