



A look at a local pollie

By **SOPHIE PAHL**

As a current year 12 student at Lameroo, I was recently privileged to have the opportunity to undertake work experience with Adrian Pederick MP, Member for Hammond.

Two weeks ago I began my work experience with Mr Pederick where we spent three days in Parliament House, Adelaide, and three days in the Electoral Office in Murray Bridge.

Throughout my three days in Parliament House I was able to shadow Mr Pederick in his daily duties.

I envisaged this would be very different to what I learnt to be reality.

Without due consideration, I presumed an entire day in Parliament would be passed by sitting in the chamber with politicians debating back and forth, which would basically be the hour of question time with very little order between the Government and the Opposition.

In reality, there was much more to it.

I was able to attend meetings and briefings along with chamber duties and question time.

There was very little time spent debating from both sides of the bench, and a lot more behind the scenes work which people neglect to recognise.

By attending meetings and briefings, I was fortunate enough to meet many other MPs, Honourable Members and the mentionable Ambassador of Iraq.

It is important to mention the long hours that are involved in these days, we would arrive at work any time after 8am, and some days not return home until after 10.30pm.

For me this was a shock to my body clock, as a 9am to 3.30pm school attendee.

During my time at the office I performed general tasks of filing, creating spread sheets and observing communication with constituents.

Throughout my work experience I began to truly realise the long, consuming hours of work that Mr Pederick does and how these hours go to impact and better the lives of those living within the electorate of Hammond.

On one of the days that we worked in Parliament House, Mr Pederick presented a

bill for the rights of foster parents, after the tragic story of a local Murray Bridge lady whose foster child tragically passed away, and then found out her rights as a foster mother ceased at the passing of the child.

Mr Pederick presented Finn's Law to the State Parliament on the three-month anniversary of Finn's passing, which allows foster parents the opportunity to be recognised on a death certificate if the child dies in their care, and a chance to be involved in the child's funeral arrangements.

The current law as stands neglects all of these rights.

Being involved in minor parts of preparation for this law allowed me to understand the copious amounts of work involved in amending a law, the process of presenting the bill to the Parliament and finally allowing the bill to be recognised as a law; if passed.

An MP currently spends 20 weeks of the year sitting in Parliament, for which they often receive criticism because to the common person, the work in Parliament is all they see.

Whereas in reality, the MP spends the other 32 weeks of the year out in their electorate communities, understanding how to enhance and better the lives of those within the communities, then putting into place a potential practice, working with lawyers and other contributing parties to write bills and assure each practice abides all social, legal and political ethics.

My time with Mr Pederick was also complemented by working alongside his assistant and trainee, which without their assistance, skills and knowledge, the work Mr Pederick does would be absolutely impossible.

I learnt that behind every successful politician, is their equally as hard working assistants and staff, especially the ladies working tirelessly for Mr Pederick in the electoral office located in Murray Bridge.

At the conclusion of my working week, I gained a whole new level of appreciation for the work done by the Liberal Party of South Australia, and overall the great skills and knowledge held by Mr Adrian Pederick, who is enhancing the lives of those for whom he works for within his Electorate of Hammond.