

**Legislative Council
Hansard
Wednesday 24 June 2026**

The President, **Mr Farrell**, took the Chair at 11 a.m. acknowledged the Traditional People and read Prayers.

[excerpt...]

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT AMENDMENT (TARGETED REFORM)
BILL 2026 (No. 10)**

In Committee

Clause 33 -

Section 291 substituted
291. Assistance to electors

Mr VINCENT - I'd like to move an amendment to this clause. I move -

Page 54, proposed new section 291(1), subsection (1).

Leave out that subsection.

Insert instead the following subsections:

- (x) The Electoral Commissioner may approve any procedures that are reasonable and appropriate to assist an elector who is unable to vote without assistance.
- (y) If an elector is to be assisted in voting in an election, an electoral officer for that election is to advise any scrutineers for that election of the approved procedure by which the elector will be voting.

Ms WEBB - Thank you, Madam Deputy Chair. I'm really pleased that the minister was open to working with me on these amendments and I appreciate -

Mr VINCENT - Sorry for not recognising that.

Ms WEBB - Thank you, minister. These are amendments that I brought to the minister to consider, and it was a constructive process to work with the minister and his office on ensuring that we got the outcome because in intent, they don't change what is in the bill, but they have addressed some concerns by key stakeholders. Having said that, I think it's definitely worthwhile briefly pointing out to the Chamber that in terms of the genesis of these amendments, the need for the amendments arose when my office contacted key stakeholders, particularly Disability Voices Tasmania and the former Anti-Discrimination Commissioner, Dr Robin Banks, in May, as the bill was scheduled to be debated in May by our Chamber.

I wanted to check with them as key stakeholders in relation to these particular parts of the bill and whether they were happy with the proposed alternative voting procedures in the bill as it stands. Surprise, surprise, they actually hadn't seen a draft of the bill. They weren't

aware the provisions were being included. They hadn't been directly consulted on the bill. It was interesting that the CEO of Disability Voices Tasmania said this to us that afternoon of the bill's scheduled debate in May:

Beyond submitting to the initial consultation, DVT has not been involved. We have attempted on numerous occasions to find out what is happening but to no avail.

Later that same day, once I'd had the opportunity to briefly consider the clauses in the bill that we're considering, they were deeply concerned about it and so I'm really pleased that the minister and his office had been receptive to hearing these concerns and acting to address them, as we see given the effect in this amendment, but it's disappointing that this was actually another key example of directly impacted stakeholders not being proactively consulted by government on this bill. I think actually it's worth me just putting that on the record here because we've heard from those other key stakeholders, PMAT and TCT (Tasmanian Conservation Trust), also finding it difficult to feel that they had been effectively consulted on this bill. It is a pattern of behaviour.

Back to these amendments: I think we do need to recognise these as a really positive way forward. The intent of them is to align pieces of legislation that relate to voting, namely, this *Local Government Act* with the *Electoral Act* and make sure that the way alternative voting provisions are treated is aligned and consistent across both. I'm very supportive of these amendments.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 34 -
Section 296 substituted

Mr VINCENT - Thank you, and I do apologise for not acknowledging that in the first part of that. Clause 34 is also something that the member for Nelson worked very closely on with my staff and office to make sure this was correct. I'd like to acknowledge that properly this time. Thank you.