



# MEDIA RELEASE

HON ROBERT BROKENSHERE MLC

**FAMILY FIRST  
EDUCATION SPOKESPERSON**



## FAMILY FIRST TO CREATE EDUCATION OMBUDSMAN

Friday 17 October 2008

FAMILY FIRST MLC Robert Brokenshere has announced today that his Party is ready to introduce a Bill creating an Education Ombudsman, to deal with public outcry over Education Department in action or bureaucratic bungling of complaints by students, parents and teachers alike

“This is a system that is breaking down, and the solution is an Ombudsman specific to the education sector”, Mr Brokenshere said.

FAMILY FIRST’s Bill will:

- Appoint an Education Ombudsman independent of Government with the powers of a Royal Commission (as is the case with the State Ombudsman);
- Enable the Education Ombudsman to initiate his or her own investigations, or conduct investigations referred to him or her by the Minister or a Parliamentary Committee;
- Allows the Education Ombudsman to make directions to the Minister to amend school discipline policies;
- Require any changes in School Discipline Policy to be scrutinised by Parliament’s Social Development Committee, as previously promised;
- Provides immunity from civil liability for any person who complains to the Ombudsman or makes a statement in an Ombudsman’s investigation; and
- Allows the State Ombudsman to transfer existing education-related matters to the new Education Ombudsman

“I have been absolutely appalled at the tales from the education system that I have heard from constituents contacting my office and on talkback radio”, Mr Brokenshere remarked, “Never in my time in Parliament have I heard such awful allegations of neglect of children and disregard for parents’ concerns.”

“Installing an Ombudsman experienced in and specific to the Education sector is a priority for FAMILY FIRST and I hope will receive the support of the Government when I introduce my Bill”