



**THE HON ANTHONY ALBANESE MP  
FEDERAL MEMBER FOR GRAYNDLER**

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
SAMSN - A GREAT COMMUNITY ORGANISATION  
SPEECH**

**14 July 2014**

**Mr ALBANESE** (Grayndler) (10:59): Today I rise to recognise one of the many great community organisations in my electorate of Grayndler, SAMSN, which was started by one of my constituents, Craig Hughes-Cashmore and his mate Shane McNamara in 2011.

SAMSN- the Survivors & Mates Support Network- provides critical support for male survivors of childhood sexual abuse and makes a phenomenal difference in the lives of the men who participate.

The biblical story of Samson tells of how his strength helped him overcome his demons and oppressors. This is what SAMSN the organisation does.

It is Australia's first NGO committed to helping male survivors of childhood sexual abuse. To date it has run seven, eight-week psychologist-led support groups in Erskineville and a successful first workshop for men and their families in the Hunter region.

The organisation hopes to expand their service provision throughout regional Australia.

In January 2013 Labor set up the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. At the same time Labor also recognised that there was a need to ensure those who spoke up about their past had access to the support services they might need.

To address this we set aside \$45 million for community-based organisations that provide support for those suffering from childhood sexual abuse. This has occurred. In round two of the funding process under the coalition government, SAMSN's application for funding was rejected.

This is despite the fact that 64 per cent of people presenting to the royal commission are men and 38 per cent of institutions under investigation by the royal commissioner are based in New South Wales.

Last year in the November Community Affairs Legislation Committee we were told that the department had left some funding unallocated for later years.

SAMSN's eighth eight-week group commenced in May. It is full, with 12 men ranging in age from their late 20s to their early 60s. They have had to put another nine men on a waiting list and over 100 men and their families from around the country have expressed interest in doing one or more of the workshops.

If this is not sufficiently indicative of the need for more support services then I don't know what is.

I want to recognise the tremendous work that SAMSN does and call upon the government to ensure that any remaining money is spent on organisations such as SAMSN who deliver this vital service.