

AUSTRALIAN ORGAN AND TISSUE DONATION AND TRANSPLANTATION AUTHORITY BILL 2008 – 24th September 2008

Mrs VALE (Hughes) (6:31 PM) —I thank the generosity of my colleague the member for Ballarat for allowing me to speak in the interlude for five minutes. I commend the [Australian Organ and Tissue Donation and Transplantation Authority Bill 2008](#) to the House and I support it wholeheartedly. I actually wanted to make a special note that when we think about donating organs we do not often think that we may one day need to be a recipient of such generosity ourselves.

My father contracted leukaemia when he was in his early 70s. The doctor told my father that it certainly was not going to be something he would die of but he would certainly die with it because of his age. He accepted and lived with that. But when my youngest brother, Roger, also contracted leukaemia in his early 40s, it was a very different issue. For many years, under the guidance of his medical advisers, he managed that particular condition for some time. But it became increasingly evident that he would require a bone marrow transplant.

I know that bone marrow is not considered to be the kind of transplant like an organ where there is a trauma that actually makes such a gift available. As it happens, we all as family members took the test to see if we were compatible for the transplant, but we were not. So a search began across Australia for a compatible donor. Eventually, two were found, so I think it is a wonderful thing that there will be a central authority that is going to be able to manage and coordinate such donations. My brother subsequently had the operation over 2½ years ago, and he has an excellent prognosis for the rest of his life.

I want to say on behalf of my brother and my family that we were not able to obtain the name of the person from Victoria who made such a generous donation. Through you, Madam Speaker, and through the *Hansard*, I want to say to that young man in Victoria: thank you for what you did for our family. We can never thank you enough. Your generosity has certainly touched all of our hearts and the hearts of all those with whom we come into contact. I commend this bill and, if ever you read it, my brother's name is Roger Ward. He comes from Upper Lansdowne near Taree, so you might identify him by that. I just want you to know that we are grateful for your generosity and for the gift of life that you have given to my brother.