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South Australian Association Of State School Organisations Inc.

Tuesday September 16, 2014

The Hon Jennifer Rankine
Minister for Education and Child Development
31 Flinders Street
Adelaide SA 5000

Dear Minister,

Re: Special Needs Safety

With the crisis engulfing the Department for Education and Child Development, parents are understandably worried about the safety of their children. This fear is no more keenly felt than among parents with special needs children - those particularly vulnerable to abuse.

Premier Weatherill has said that the State Government will consider all ideas in attempts to fix the department and improve the safety of our children.

SAASSO has been asked by schools, to request on their behalf, that the following protocols be implemented and used in concert, in the best interests of special needs children:

1. When special needs children are transported by a private contractor, two adults must be present. Ideally, the driver plus a SSO or HSO. In addition to protecting children from predatory acts and inappropriate conduct, this would also provide support for drivers; who are likely not trained to deal with the special medical, safety, and behavioural needs of children with disabilities.
1. Security cameras be required for all vehicles transporting special needs children - just as currently exists in taxis and buses. While not directly protective, cameras may discourage assaults and also assist in catching and prosecuting predators - thereby protecting future victims.

Minister, we hope this proposal is given serious consideration. Should you wish to contact us, I invite you to write to me at PO Box 6178, Halifax Street, Adelaide, SA, 5000.

As always, we would be happy to assist in any way possible.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gino Amato', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Gino Amato
President