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## Family daycare closure an entirely avoidable tragedy

Burnie Advocate, Burnie



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Page 1 of 1

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## COMMENT

### Senator Richard Colbeck

THE final reality of Tanya Banks being forced to close down Abracadabra Family Day Care is an absolute travesty of inaction, and the responsible minister should be ashamed (Adv., April 25).

Tanya has been providing family daycare at Spreyton for more than 20 years, providing caring services for generations of children in our community - a service that has been described to me by one user as not only welcome but loved by the families who sent their children there. If the federal government had followed the recommendations of its own Productivity Commission review of quality childcare, Tanya could still be provid-

ing that loved care.

Recommendation 5.3 of the PC report supported the continuation of the dual provider model, particularly in regional Australia. It states: "The National Quality Framework should be amended to allow two educators to provide education and care to up to 14 children at any one time at an approved family daycare venue. No more than eight children can be preschool age or under.

"This amendment should only apply to approved family day care venues in Inner Regional Australia, Outer Regional Australia, Remote Australia and Very Remote Australia as defined in the Australian Statistical Geog-

raphy Standard."

The minister held the future of Abracadabra Family Day Care at the tip of her pen, she chose to do nothing and now the service is gone. Such a tragedy when this region is what is known as a childcare desert and now even more families are left to scramble for the rare places available.

Right now, waiting times for childcare in this region extend out beyond a year, it is crazy that the government is forcing these small providers to close their doors when we read how fast our communities are growing. Absurdly, Addisons Family Day care at Latrobe is subject to the same threat, but the minister does nothing.

It seems the Labor government is only interested in playing politics and blaming someone else rather than fix the problem.

Yes, Labor is supporting other services, but clearly their preference is for big corporate centres with a unionised workforce rather than small family-based operators that have been providing quality service to our community for decades.

Minister Walsh, pick up the pen and fix this.

**Richard Colbeck is a Liberal senator for Tasmania**

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