



# Barry O'Farrell MP

## Premier of NSW

### Minister for Western Sydney

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## MEDIA RELEASE

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Thursday 20 September 2012

### NSW PARLIAMENT APOLOGISES FOR FORCED ADOPTION PRACTICES

The NSW Parliament today apologised to mothers, fathers, people adopted as children and other family members who suffered from the forced adoption practices of the past, NSW Premier Barry O'Farrell and Minister for Family and Community Services Pru Goward said.

"The NSW Parliament, on behalf of the people of NSW, expresses its great sorrow and remorse for the lasting damage these practices have caused in the lives of so many," Mr O'Farrell said.

"Saying sorry can never change what happened. But it is our great hope that this sincere and heartfelt public apology will offer healing and comfort to those who have suffered because of the practices of the past," he said.

The Apology in the NSW Parliament follows recommendations made by the Parliamentary inquiry into past adoption practices in their *Releasing the Past* report of 2000 and the federal Senate Committee's inquiry report of February 2012 entitled *The Commonwealth's Contribution to Former Forced Adoption Policies and Practices*.

Over 300 people were in Parliament today to witness the Apology.

Ms Goward said in developing the Apology the NSW Government consulted with mothers, adopted persons and fathers who were affected by the adoption practices of the past as well as advocacy and support organisations for these people.

"The NSW Government is also implementing practical measures to help people who have been affected by forced adoption practices," Ms Goward said.

"The Department of Family and Community Services will abolish the fees that it currently charges adopted people and birth parents for the Authority they need to obtain adoption information from other organisations as well as the fees for adoption information services provided by the Department.

"Funding for the Post Adoption Resource Centre will also be increased by up to \$900,000 over 3 years, dependent on need, with a particular focus on rural and regional areas.

"Currently \$442,000 is provided annually to the Post Adoption Resource Centre to help support the counselling and other services they provide to people affected by past adoptions," Ms Goward said.

People who wish to access a copy of the Apology are encouraged to visit [www.facs.nsw.gov.au](http://www.facs.nsw.gov.au) from Friday 21 September

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