



OVERWHELMING PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR ‘JUSTICE FOR BIDDY PORTER’

When Rebekah Porter, mother of 10-year-old Bridgette “Biddy” Porter initiated the campaign seeking justice for her precious little girl, she could not have imagined how deeply Biddy’s tragic story would touch the hearts of so many, with media and the community throwing their full support behind the *#Justice4BiddyPorter* campaign.

After four agonising years since Biddy’s brutal killing at the hands of a young person she trusted, today, less than two months after Advocacy Australia launched the *Justice for Biddy Porter* campaign, the NSW Parliament e-petition has achieved the minimum 20,000 signatures required for Independent MP for Orange, Philip Donato, to present it for debate on the floor of NSW Parliament.

In a first for NSW, the *Justice for Biddy Porter* e-petition is calling for Parliamentary Inquiries into the NSW Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions’ (DPP) handling of the case against Biddy’s killer, the Mental Health Review Tribunal’s (MHRT) lack of transparency and accountability; reform of the Department of Communities and Justice Victims’ Support Services (VSS); and a Coronial Inquest into the circumstances surrounding Biddy’s death.

Philip Donato MP who sponsored the petition said, “Enduring the loss of their daughter and knowing the horrific circumstances in which she died is traumatic enough for Biddy’s parents - the living victims of this heinous crime.

“However, to then be faced with the apparent failures of state-based agencies and the unbalanced support between the offender and Biddy’s parents, I felt compelled to do whatever I could to assist them in seeking justice for their daughter and to help prevent other families from being let-down by the same systems,” said Mr Donato.

“In taking the *Justice for Biddy Porter* e-petition to parliament, we hope to deliver justice for Biddy and affect much needed reform that will help the many current and future victims of serious crimes throughout NSW,” he said.

Comforted by the overwhelming support for Biddy’s campaign, Rebekah Porter said, “Biddy’s campaign holds immense significance for me because it’s given Biddy back her name, her precious face, her voice and her identity which was erased four years ago to protect her killer.”

“In shedding light on the failures of systems that should have brought justice to my little girl, and supported us, her family, but instead continues to fail us and many other victims throughout NSW, Biddy’s campaign for justice extends well beyond my little girl’s case.

“Through the *Justice for Biddy Porter* e-petition over 20,000 NSW residents including children have added their voices to our calls for reform to how all victims are treated and heard in a system that continues to fail us - it is a call for change and a tribute to the memory of my beloved daughter, Biddy,” said Ms Porter.

“By advocating for justice, transparency, and accountability in all cases of serious crimes, we are not only seeking closure for Biddy but also striving to ensure that other victims and their families are not let down by the agencies whose role it is to seek justice for victims and meet community expectations,” she said.

“I want to express my heartfelt gratitude for the unwavering support and dedication of Advocacy Australia, Philip Donato and his team, the people of Orange and the wider community of NSW – all have been a beacon of hope and strength during this difficult time.

“Reflecting on where I was just over a year ago and feeling so helpless, to now see Biddy’s story in media and being talked about by people she never knew; and to see more than 20,000 people from across NSW add their voices to ours enabling our petition to be presented in Parliament; has been a journey that’s filled my heart with both sorrow for the loss of my precious daughter and hope that through Biddy’s campaign we will reform a broken system that favours killers over victims,” Ms Porter said.

Clare Collins, Chair of Advocacy Australia said, “Sadly, Bidy’s family’s circumstances are not unique. With a chasm of inequity between victims of heinous crimes and perpetrators, there’s something terribly wrong when NSW Government agencies with the responsibility to defend victims’ rights, fail to meet community expectations.

“The community’s widespread support for the *Justice for Bidy Porter* e-petition and our *Outside NSW Supporters Register* is testimony to the community’s views that no public servant or service should be above public scrutiny and accountability when it comes to seeking justice and reform of services that are failing victims.

“In supporting Bidy’s petition, more than 20,000 people from across NSW and 1500 outside NSW, have added their voice to ours calling for MPs to meet community expectations and support what we hope will be a significant benchmark in creating essential change to help Bidy’s parents and all victims of serious crimes who continue to suffer year-in and year-out in every community throughout the state,” she said.

“With wide-spread community support for our e-petition calling for Parliamentary Inquiries, we hope all members of NSW Parliament will reflect the community’s view and support the call for inquiries to deliver justice for Bidy Porter and her family, and long-awaited reform that can deliver justice to so many more victims who have continued to suffer in silence for far too long,” Ms Collins said.

-ENDS-

HASHTAGS

#Justice4BiddyPorter #Justice4Biddy #JusticeForBiddy #Petition #NSWDPP #VictimsOfCrime #MHRT

INTERVIEW REQUESTS

- Phil Donato MP: Mr Brett Cooke - E: Brett.Cooke@parliament.nsw.gov.au M: 0439 210 396
- Clare Collins: Advocacy Australia - E: media@advocacyaustralia.org.au M: 0414 821 957



JOURNALIST NOTES: MORE INFORMATION & LINKS

- #Justice4BiddyPorter campaign and E-Petition: justice4biddyporter.com
- **Media Centre** - Vision, photographs of Bidy, Rebekah, Dominic and Philip Donato MP: bit.ly/JusticeForBiddy-MediaCentre
- **7 News Spotlight**: Justice For Bidy <https://bit.ly/Justice4Biddy-Spotlight>
- **Media coverage** including NSW Police interviews with Bidy’s killer: bit.ly/PORTER-news-com-au
- **A profile of a NSW forensic health facility**: bit.ly/MHRT-Ch9

BIDDY’S PARENT’S AUTHORITY TO RELEASE INFORMATION TO MEDIA

The information, photographs and vision made available to media for publication were issued by Advocacy Australia with the full consent of Bridgette “Bidy” Porter’s senior available next of kin - Rebekah Porter (mother) and Dominic Porter (father), for publication under section 15E of the *Children’s (Criminal Proceedings) Act 1987* (NSW) - *15E Exception where child deceased (1) This Division does not prohibit the publication or broadcasting of the name of a deceased child with the consent of a senior available next of kin of the child.*

Media are advised that some information about the case is suppressed including the injuries Bridgette “Bidy” Porter suffered, the identity of her killer, and three (3) Victim Impact Statements that are not those of Bidy’s parents. In authorising the release and distribution of information relating to Bidy’s identity, Rebekah Porter, Dominic Porter and Advocacy Australia are not authorising the publication or distribution in any form, of any information about the case that is otherwise suppressed under the *Courts Suppression and Non-Publication Orders Act 2019* (NSW) or the *Children’s (Criminal Proceedings) Act 1987* (NSW).

THE PETITION - #Justice4BiddyPorter - justice4biddyporter.com

Advocacy Australia launched an NSW Parliament e-petition supported by Philip Donato MP, Independent Member for Orange. The petition that now has the required 20,000 signatures calls for Parliamentary Inquiries into the NSW Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions and the Mental Health Review Tribunal, essential reforms to Department of Communities and Justice Victims' Services, and a Coronial Inquest into the circumstances surrounding Bridgette "Biddy" Porter's death. **LINK: #Justice4BiddyPorter - E-Petition:** <https://advocacyaustralia.org.au/justice4biddyporter/>

Bridgette "Biddy" Porter's parents and Advocacy Australia are petitioning for:

1. Parliamentary Inquiries into:

- a) **NSW Office of Director of Public Prosecutions' (DPP)** handling of Biddy Porter's case and its accountability under the *Charter of Victims Rights*, the *Victims Rights and Support Act 2013*, and *ODPP (NSW) Prosecution Guidelines*.
- b) **The Mental Health Review Tribunal's** lack of transparency and accountability having absolute, independent power to release killers back into the community with victims' families and the community powerless to object.

2. Reform to Victims' Support Services

Reform the Department of Communities and Justice Victims' Support Services to increase funding and provide appropriate support for victims of serious crimes.

3. Coronial Inquest into Biddy's death

An inquest into circumstances surrounding Biddy's death to prevent similar killings.

ABOUT BRIDGETTE "BIDDY" PORTER

10-year-old Bridgette "Biddy" Porter was the only daughter of Rebekah and Dominic Porter. Known to her loved ones as 'Biddy', she was a healthy, happy, creative, intelligent little girl with a fascination about world issues way beyond what might be expected of a ten-year-old child growing up in rural NSW.

An incredibly talented artist for her age, Biddy had created beautiful sculptures, drawings and moving watercolour paintings. Biddy also loved to write insightful stories and poetry about nature, life in the pandemic, and many of her other interests which were extensive. Biddy was not a 'girly' girl who was into wearing frills and lace. Raised in the bush, Biddy loved animals and had a passion for exciting activities and adventures like riding quadbikes – an interest she shared with her father and two older brothers. Life had to be fast and exciting for this creative little Vegemite who was full of beans and up for any challenge. Besides being a happy, creative and energetic little girl, of all Biddy's personality traits, her loved ones say her dominant characteristic was kindness. Biddy was kind to animals, kind to her friends and school mates and kind to her family. Biddy cared deeply for others and her strength of character and passion to fight injustices saw her challenge bullies who threatened younger children. Biddy would stand her ground and 'fight the good fight' to protect other vulnerable children too young, too small or too innocent to defend themselves. Her kind-hearted nature knew no bounds.

Biddy loved to write and in what might be considered unusual for any ten-year-old child, early in life Biddy had a dream to grow up to be a journalist and write important stories to share with the world. Biddy also loved music. One of her favourite songs was 'Roar' by Katie Perry. Now, with support from Advocacy Australia, four years after Biddy's brutal killing her parents have launched a campaign and a NSW Parliamentary e-Petition calling for justice for Biddy with this song the theme that drives them to give their little girl back her voice, so she is no longer silenced.

ABOUT ADVOCACY AUSTRALIA - advocacyaustralia.org.au

In June 2023, Rebekah approached Advocacy Australia appealing for support. Advocacy Australia aims to promote and defend the rights of victims of serious crimes and the families who've been affected by horrific circumstances such as murder, suspicious disappearance and abduction, and works to uphold their right to the truth, redress, protection and to be treated with respect and understanding.

The services provided to Rebekah and Dominic are completely un-funded. All are conducted in a pro-bono capacity by Board Directors, Clare Collins (Chair) and Alice Collins (Secretary). To continue to provide support for victims such as Rebekah and Dominic, funding is desperately needed. A registered charity with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profit Commission, Advocacy Australia has tax-deductibility status with the ATO.

ABOUT PHILIP DONATO MP - phildonato.com.au

- **Member of the Legislative Assembly**
- **Member for Orange**
- **Independent**
- **Chair, Committee on the Ombudsman, the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission and the Crime Commission**
- **Member, Legislative Assembly Committee on Law and Safety**



Philip Donato has served as a member of the New South Wales Parliament since 2016, having first secured the seat of Orange at the November 2016 by-election. To win the seat he broke the National Party hold, which had lasted for nearly 70 years. Phil was convincingly re-elected at the 2019 election and after running as an independent for the first time he won the March 2023 election with a 6.7% swing in his favour.

As an independent Phil enjoys a good relationship with both sides of parliament but ultimately his goal is to ensure the communities of the Orange electorate are well represented. Prior to pursuing politics, Phil served in the NSW police force for 22 years. His career in the police force started in 1995 working around South-West Sydney and the Illawarra.

In 1997 Phil was seconded to Operation Puccini to control the gang and heroin trade in Cabramatta following the political assassination of local MP John Newman.

In 2001 Phil joined to the Police Prosecutions branch and in 2005 he transferred to Orange. Phil's journey has been shaped by opportunities and a dedication to service. After a 22-year career in the Force, he embraced a new chapter when invited to run for the seat of Orange. Embracing this challenge, Phil saw it as a chance to offer better representation for regional communities. His diverse background equips him with a broad knowledge base and a deep understanding of the people he serves.

A firm believer in the power of community and individual responsibility, Phil has always been committed to helping others. This desire to contribute to his community unexpectedly steered him toward a political path. His experience has honed his ability to look beyond conflicts, engage in meaningful debates, and foster collaborative engagement. Politics, for Phil, is not just about discussing what matters; it's about being actively involved in shaping it.

A real family man, Phil and his wife Nadia have five adult sons and enjoy plenty of outdoor recreation, sport, and good food. Phil's family migrated from Italy nearly a century ago and he grew up in Western Sydney where his parents were market gardeners and ran Donato's Fruit Market. Phil credits his love of community and food to his Italian heritage.