

~~not available. In 2007-08 we had the best response times in the country. Some 50 per cent of the emergency cases were responded to within 8.3 minutes, ahead of New South Wales at 9.9 minutes.~~

~~(Time expired)~~

~~Regional Local Infrastructure Program~~

~~Mr HOBBS: My question is to the Minister for Local Government. Minister, I refer to the Rudd government's 2009 regional local infrastructure program heralded by Labor as delivering community infrastructure like sportsgrounds, swimming pools, community centres and town halls, and I ask: can the minister advise why the distribution formula is so biased against rural communities, with Queensland's 32 western councils, covering over half of the state, receiving just \$1,086,000 in total from the \$500 million program?~~

~~Mr SPEAKER: Minister for Local Government, you have 30 seconds.~~

~~Ms BOYLE: This is, as the question indicates, a question for the Rudd government. It is its program and its determination.~~

~~Mr SPEAKER: Order! The time for question time has expired.~~

013

~~SPEAKER'S STATEMENT~~

~~Notice of Motion~~

~~Mr SPEAKER: I will confer with the Clerk on the motion before the House. When I have made a decision on that, I will notify both sides of the House as to the status of that notice of motion.~~

PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

CRIMINAL CODE (HONESTY AND INTEGRITY IN PARLIAMENT) AMENDMENT BILL

First Reading

Mr LANGBROEK (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (11.30 am): I present a bill for an act to amend the Criminal Code to provide for the offence of giving false evidence before parliament and to make a particular consequential amendment to the Parliament of Queensland Act 2001. I present the explanatory notes, and I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

Question put—That the bill be now read a first time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

Tabled paper: Criminal Code (Honesty and Integrity in Parliament) Amendment Bill 2009.

Tabled paper: Criminal Code (Honesty and Integrity in Parliament) Amendment Bill 2009, explanatory notes.

Second Reading

Mr LANGBROEK (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (11.31 am): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

Today I introduce a bill into this House that, if passed, will restore true honesty and integrity into the Queensland parliament. In 2006 the integrity and honesty that was expected of members of parliament was destroyed by the government when it used its numbers to effectively decriminalise the offence of providing false evidence to parliament or its committees. The removal of this offence was an open invitation to legalised deceit and mistruths and the final act in helping one of its own whose actions had amounted to misleading an estimates hearing. Every member of parliament is elected on the basis of honesty, integrity and standing up for the truth. The need to ensure accountability in parliament is a foundation of our system of government, yet this has been missing from this parliament for some years. Honesty and integrity should be in the DNA of every decent politician, but allowing a politician to deliberately provide false evidence to parliament or one of its committees destroys the very foundations of a democracy.

The need for codification of criminal offences concerning parliamentarians was raised by Daniel Morgan in the *Australian Law Journal* in 2008 where, in concluding, he wrote—

In terms of 'best practice' legislative drafting, the approach of Sir Samuel Griffith in drafting the Criminal Code provisions to include parliamentary offences was almost a century ahead of its time.

Given the time constraints, I seek leave to have the remainder of my speech incorporated in *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

I am introducing amendments to the Criminal Code 1899 and Parliament of Queensland Act 2001.

The amendment to the Criminal Code will introduce the offence of providing false evidence to Parliament. This offence is a crime and carries a maximum 7 years imprisonment. The Community should be able to expect that as members of this house who sit in parliament or before one of its committees they do so knowing that they will be required to tell the truth and be honest. The people of Queensland deserve no less.

We so often hear members of this government harp on about separation of powers, but when they removed this law they breached that separation of powers, by making the parliament judge and jury.

The amendment to the Parliament of Queensland Act 2001 amends s47 to make it clear acts amounting to both contempt of parliament and providing false evidence under the criminal code, the code offence should be proceeded with.

This Bill makes it clear that any member in this house and anyone else appearing before it, if you deliberately provide false evidence to parliament or one of its committees you commit a crime.

The Queensland Opposition take honesty and integrity in parliament very seriously and by all our members supporting this Bill they have put themselves on notice and are willing to continue to be honest and forthright without fear.

It's now up to this Premier and her Government to support this Bill and show that they too will not tolerate providing false evidence to parliament by its members and the only way to show real honesty and integrity is to support this Bill.

This is a test of honesty, and step closer to restoring faith in the process of parliament and a vital step to proving to the people of Queensland the truth truly does exist in parliament.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Fraser, adjourned.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Kowanyama State School

~~Mr O'BRIEN (Cook - ALP) (11.31 am): Through a partnership with author Wendy Notley and her publisher Blake Education, the Kowanyama State School is very proud to announce the publication of two children's books which have been fully illustrated with students' artwork. Art teacher Rachael Morgan supported by principal Michael Ward have worked with Wendy for some 18 months to bring these beautiful books into publication and available nationally through Blake Education publishers. I table the books for the information of the House.~~

~~Tabled paper: Books titled 'Insects' and 'Special Land'.~~

~~The final product is of a high standard in keeping with the quality that is expected in the retail sector.~~

~~Kowanyama State School is located on the western side of Cape York and is a P 10 school with an enrolment of approximately 200 students. Students from a range of year levels contributed drawings for the project which have been influenced by their own personal styles as well as their home setting, which is the traditional Aboriginal homeland for the Kokoberra, Kunjen and Kokominjena people representing five language groups. The community is one of the most remote and isolated in Queensland, being totally cut off except by air during the wet season. The receding waters from the wet leave a large area of ponds and wetlands inhabited by an enormous variety of tropical birds and animal life in a pristine setting.~~

~~I want to congratulate the Kowanyama State School for the initiative that it has taken. A problem in a lot of these communities in encouraging young people to read is that many of the books do not speak to them. They are not about their stories; they are about different places that really do not connect with the kids. What the school, the teachers and the students themselves have done here is produce a publication that is about their community. It is about their place and I think the kids will have a much greater interest in it and hopefully become much better readers and more engaged with the wider curriculum at the Kowanyama State School.~~

Accountability in Government

~~Mr SPRINGBORG (Southern Downs - LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (11.35 am): It is absolutely clear from the last two days of parliament that this government not only does not have a moral compass but also has absolutely no judgement of what morality and integrity are in any way whatsoever. Indeed, when the Premier has been asked if she will now direct the Labor Party to repay money which it has received from a person who has been charged with political corruption, an amount of \$2,450~~

~~Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Hoolihan): I would remind the member for Southern Downs of the previous ruling of the Speaker in relation to that. Be very careful where you go with it.~~