

~~This union official's word cannot be trusted as her word has no integrity. This union official knew that I had met with teachers and represented their concerns to the minister. She knew that because I told her that in a letter dated 7 August 2012. I table that letter now for the benefit of the House.~~

~~Tabled paper: Letter, dated 7 August 2012, from Mr Trevor Ruthenberg MP Member for Kallangur to Ms Fiona McNamara, Queensland Teachers Union regarding the concerns of union members in the Kallangur electorate.~~

~~This union official then proceeded to inform teachers and QTU representatives in schools and I quote from an email that I received from one of these officials—~~

~~... despite a recent request for a meeting regarding EB7—Trevor Ruthenberg the LNP member for Kallangur has declined to meet with a small group of teachers to discuss the current negotiation. He appears to believe he does not need to meet with teachers who are his local constituents. This is an extremely disappointing decision.~~

~~In my letter to this union official I stated—~~

~~Since my election as an MP, I have met with principals and many of the staff of all of the schools in the electorate. I have met with some teachers as a group. One union representative and two other teachers have requested that I voice their concerns about the EB7 negotiations to the Premier and Hon Minister John Paul Langbroek. I have written to both of these people for them. There have been numerous emails from teachers in the electorate which have all been forwarded to Ministers or answered directly.~~

~~I can inform the House that even after I wrote the letters to the minister I took many phone calls from teachers and spoke with them all if they lived in my electorate, even if I had to return their calls. I also spoke with the nearest principal representative for the QTU. For this union official to then suggest that I was unwilling to meet with teachers is simply wrong. To suggest I think I do not need to meet with teachers is wrong.~~


~~This union official lacks integrity and she has shown that her word cannot be trusted. She took advantage of the good faith placed in her by the union members, who trusted her but who were deceived by her. For the record, my wife is a teacher.~~

~~In a letter to the Minister for Education, dated 28 June 2012, I expressed to the minister the concerns of the teachers and QTU teacher representatives as best I could without bias, fear or favour, as I had explained to the union official. The QTU needs to offer a public apology to the teachers in north Brisbane for deceiving their membership. Further, the QTU needs to discipline this union official for her blatant disregard for the truth, just like a teacher would discipline a child who caused serious mischief.~~

~~I said this union official had runs on the board when it came to twisting the truth to suit her own purposes. This union official was a campaign manager for the Labor Party in Ashgrove during the last state election and oversaw the disgusting display of untruths brought against the Premier and his wife. I understand that this person is now the endorsed candidate for the Labor Party for the federal seat of Brisbane. This person is Fiona McNamara and after twice contesting the seat of Dickson and losing, thankfully, she now has her eyes set on the federal seat of Brisbane. I warn the people living in that electorate to think very carefully before they consider this candidate. This person has shown over a period of time and in several different settings, first during the state election and now as a QTU official, that truth is a casualty in her naked political ambition and that she cannot be trusted to act with any sort of integrity.~~

GUARDIANSHIP AND ADMINISTRATION AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction

 **Hon. JP BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (12.37 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the Guardianship and Administration Act 2000, the Electoral Act 1992, the Electrical Safety Act 2002, the Legal Profession Act 2007, the Motor Accident Insurance Act 1994, the Penalties and Sentences Act 1992, the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal Act 2009, the Trustee Companies Act 1968 and the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 for particular purposes, and to make minor and consequential amendments of the acts mentioned in the schedule. I table the bill and the explanatory notes.

Tabled paper: Guardianship and Administration and other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012.

Tabled paper: Explanatory notes to the Guardianship and Administration and other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012.

I am pleased to introduce the Guardianship and Administration and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012. The bill amends the Guardianship and Administration Act 2000, the Electoral Act 1992, the Electrical Safety Act 2002, the Penalties and Sentences Act 1992, the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal Act 2009, the Trustee Companies Act 1968 as well as making consequential amendments to the Legal Profession Act 2007, the Motor Accident Insurance Act 1994 and the Work Health and Safety Act 2011.

The amendments in this bill contribute towards this government's pledge to the people of Queensland to implement cost savings measures and improve efficiency and accountability in the systems and practices in government. The amendments to the Guardianship and Administration Act 2000—the guardianship act—will deliver on the government's election commitment regarding the

independence of the Public Advocate. Strengthening the independence of the Public Advocate will lead to an improvement in the way government and non-government services are being delivered to vulnerable Queenslanders.

The Public Advocate's key role is to make recommendations to government about improving systems, policy and programs to better meet the needs of adults with impaired capacity and to ensure their voices are heard. The Public Advocate's role and independence will be strengthened by providing the Public Advocate with two additional powers so that the Public Advocate is able to more effectively perform the systems advocacy functions. Amendments included in the bill will allow the Public Advocate to access information or documents that the Public Advocate currently does not have access to so that the Public Advocate may be better informed when undertaking the systems advocacy function. The Public Advocate will be given a right to access information or documents from persons, such as policies or procedures of a service or agency; statistical information kept by an agency; or personal information about an adult with impaired capacity. The bill includes provisions that protect the confidentiality of any personal information obtained by the Public Advocate under this new power. Also, if a person does not comply with the Public Advocate's request for information, the person may be liable to a maximum penalty of \$10,000. In addition, the bill also allows the Public Advocate to report at any time on systems issues and requires the Attorney-General, as the responsible minister, to table the report in parliament. This will ensure the Public Advocate can publicly raise at any time systemic issues which they have significant concerns about.

People with impaired decision-making ability are among the most vulnerable members of our community and having a strong guardianship system with effective safeguard for adults who have impaired decision-making capacity is important. The bill improves on the current protections in the act by giving the Public Advocate the necessary powers to effectively carry out its systems advocacy functions. I am pleased that in Queensland we now have a full-time permanent Public Advocate in Jodie Cook, along with a permanent Adult Guardian in the appointment of Kevin Martin. It is a long time since we have had permanency in these roles rather than acting arrangements. I am pleased that in the first five months of an LNP government we have appointed a full-time permanent Adult Guardian and a full-time permanent Public Advocate. We are getting on with the job of getting Queensland back on track.

The amendments to the Electoral Act 1992 remove administrative funding for political parties and independent members which was introduced by the previous government in the Electoral Reform and Accountability Amendment Act 2011. As members on this side know, although the bill at the time had the word 'accountability' in it, there was no such accountability in that legislation. This change is estimated to save the government and all Queenslanders \$3 million per annum. In order to ensure Queensland has a contemporary electoral system meeting the needs of the 21st century I will be releasing a green paper canvassing options for change. I will be encouraging Queenslanders to respond to the suggestions contained in the paper to ensure that our electoral laws serve the interests of a dynamic, democratic society.

The bill also makes two amendments to the Electrical Safety Act 2002. Firstly, replacing the Commissioner for Electrical Safety position with a chairperson role which is based on the model contained in the Work Health and Safety Act 2011. Secondly, the bill removes the nominated standing committee status of the Electrical Safety Education Committee and the Electrical Equipment Committee. The statutory role of Commissioner for Electrical Safety was created in 2002 to manage the transition into new electrical safety arrangements created under the Electrical Safety Act. The role also facilitated the work of the Electrical Safety Board and committees and acted in an advisory capacity to the minister. In the decade since the commencement of the Electrical Safety Act, the role and functions of the board and committees has been well integrated and the Commissioner has overseen any necessary fine tuning of the legislation resulting in a diminishing workload for the statutory commissioner position. The proposed amendment will see the duties of the commissioner continue to be undertaken by the new chairperson role on an as required basis. For example, management of board and committee activities would be undertaken on a per meeting basis. Similarly, the activities of the Electrical Safety Education Committee and the Electrical Equipment Committee may be continued under existing advisory committee provisions. Advisory committees may be established by the minister as and when required, providing flexibility regarding committee composition and meeting schedules to better meet variable workload requirements. These amendments will achieve substantial ongoing savings to government while not compromising safety outcomes.

Further, the bill amends the Penalties and Sentences Act 1992 to clarify the operation of earlier amendments to the act. Section 179C of the Penalties and Sentences Act 1992 provides for the imposition of the offender levy. The offender levy is not intended to apply where the only offence committed involves a breach of bail. Section 179C(6) provides that the section does not apply to an offence under the Bail Act 1980 section 29. Consistent with this policy, the bill amends section 179C of the Penalties and Sentences Act 1992 to exclude an offence for a breach of bail under section 33 of the Bail Act 1980 from the offender levy.

Other amendments in the bill, previously included in the lapsed Law Reform Bill 2011, will improve the operation of the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal by allowing former judges

who are senior or ordinary members to sit as judicial members on a broader range of matters and removing some restrictions on the exercise of stated powers. Finally, the bill includes amendments to the Trustee Companies Act 1968 in relation to the transfer of trustee company business to another trustee company and to the Public Trustee. These amendments contained in this bill further demonstrate the government's commitment to getting Queensland back on track. On that note I commend the bill to the House.

First Reading



Hon. JP BLEIJIE (Kawana—LNP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (12.45pm): 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.

Referral to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Berry): Order! In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee

~~TRANSPORT OPERATIONS (PASSENGER TRANSPORT) AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL~~

~~Introduction~~



~~**Hon. SA EMERSON** (Indooroopilly—LNP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (12.46 pm): I present a bill for an act to repeal the Transport Operations (TransLink Transit Authority) Act 2008, to amend the Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Act 1994 and to make consequential or minor amendments of other acts mentioned in the schedule for particular purposes. I table the bill and explanatory notes. I nominate the Transport, Housing and Local Government Committee to consider the bill.~~

~~Tabled paper: Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012.~~

~~Tabled paper: Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) and Other legislation Amendment Bill 2012, explanatory notes.~~

~~I am pleased to present this bill which will dissolve TransLink as a statutory authority by repealing the TransLink Act and allowing for the formal transfer of TransLink's functions to the Department of Transport and Main Roads. This is a very important bill as it forms part of this government's reform program aimed at returning prosperity, accountability and opportunity to Queensland. We need to lower the cost of living pressures on families by cutting waste, delivering better infrastructure and planning, revitalising front line services and restoring accountability. This bill is aimed directly at achieving these actions and is about getting Queensland, its finances and its public transport back on track.~~

~~Public transport service delivery across Queensland has been operating under two separate government bodies since 2008, doing essentially the same task but for different areas of the state. Dissolving TransLink as a statutory authority and making one division within the department, TransLink Division, accountable for passenger transport service delivery state wide removes this wasteful duplication. It is a leap forward in restoring public confidence in public transport which was so heavily eroded under the previous Labor government. Under this approach, the department will be fully responsible for service delivery across various modes including urban buses, long distance coaches, passenger rail, taxis, limousines, ferry and regional air services. Passenger transport users and the general community right across Queensland will benefit from this new delivery model aimed at eliminating duplication and waste and cutting red tape.~~

~~Our operators across the state have also been impacted by this role duplication and inefficiency. For example, some operators provide services both inside and outside the south east Queensland region and currently have to deal with two government bodies on different contracts. I can understand how this interface with multiple areas has led to frustration for these operators.~~

~~The bill will benefit those operators by providing a single interface for any operator regardless of where they are in the state. Finding efficiencies in the state's public transport network is imperative if we want to maintain the viability, affordability and sustainability of public transport services across Queensland. This will also be critical if we want to improve the efficiency of networks regionally, particularly in key regional urban centres such as Townsville, Cairns and Mackay where the population is growing rapidly.~~