

~~including considering amending the Evidence Act 1977 to include a presumption that victims of domestic and family violence be regarded as special witnesses. The bill implements this amendment to the Evidence Act. This means that victims of domestic violence will have increased access to the orders and directions that the court can make to support the giving of evidence by special witnesses including, for example, giving evidence from another room and giving evidence via a videotaped recording.~~

~~Amendments are included in the bill to enable a notation to be made on a charge in respect of any offence to specify whether it is an offence which occurs in a domestic violence context. Further, if an offender is subsequently found guilty of such an offence or pleads guilty, the bill provides for a court to order that this be noted on the offender's criminal history. In addition, there will be provision for the prosecution to apply to the court for a direction that similar notations be made in respect of offences on a person's criminal history. The amendments in the bill will, however, not affect the court's discretion as to whether or not to formally record a conviction against the offender or when an offender's criminal history can be taken into account. Currently, in Queensland convictions for criminal offences which have been committed in the context of domestic and family violence are recorded like any other crime, not recognising the specific nature of the abuse.~~

~~These amendments send a clear message to perpetrators that continuing to commit domestic violence which constitutes criminal offences will be considered by a court and police officers. Further, it enables supporting agencies to also become aware of escalation or increased frequency of domestic and family violence and implement measures to litigate such action. This empowers courts to take action to intervene in concerning cases to try to end the unacceptable cycle of violence. I commend the bill to the House.>~~

~~First Reading~~

~~**Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Training and Skills) (2.39 pm): 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 Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee~~

~~**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Grace): Order! In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee.~~

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<CORONERS (DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE DEATH REVIEW AND ADVISORY BOARD) AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Training and Skills) (2.40 pm): <I present a bill for an act to amend the Coroners Act >2003 to establish the Domestic and Family Violence Death Review and Advisory Board and for other particular purposes. I table the bill and the explanatory notes. I nominate the Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Coroners (Domestic and Family Violence Death Review and Advisory Board) Amendment Bill 2015.

Tabled paper: Coroners (Domestic and Family Violence Death Review and Advisory Board) Amendment Bill 2015, explanatory notes.

This bill delivers on a major recommendation in the report of the Special Taskforce on Domestic and Family Violence in Queensland, *Not now, not ever: putting an end to domestic and family violence in Queensland*. The government has already committed \$2.1 million over four years from 2015-16 to establish an independent Domestic and Family Violence Death Review and Advisory Board and increase staffing for the Domestic and Family Violence Death Review Unit. This bill provides the legislative framework to ensure the board can effectively perform its vital functions.

The task force considered that there was a clear need for a specific domestic and family violence death review process able to comprehensively review domestic and family violence services, supports and systems and identify any failures or gaps that may have contributed to domestic and family violence related deaths. Consequently, this bill amends the Coroners Act to provide for the establishment of the Domestic and Family Violence Death Review and Advisory Board to enable systemic review of deaths related to domestic and family violence to help prevent or reduce domestic violence.

Establishing the Domestic and Family Violence Death Review and Advisory Board under the Coroners Act will ensure that the board's activities complement the existing coronial processes and the board can draw on the research and data capabilities of the Office of the State Coroner. The bill provides for the board's membership, with the State Coroner or the Deputy State Coroner to be appointed as the chairperson. The minister responsible for administering the Coroners Act will be required to appoint up to 12 members the minister considers appropriate but must reflect the diversity of the Queensland community and include at least one member who is an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person. Members will be required to have experience, knowledge or skills relevant to the board's functions, for example individuals who have expertise in the fields of domestic and family violence, health and the justice system.

The functions of the board include: to review the circumstances that contributed to the death of any person who died as a result of domestic and family violence - this includes deaths that have occurred prior to the board's establishment; to analyse data and apply research to identify patterns, trends and risk factors relating to domestic and family violence deaths in Queensland; to carry out research to help prevent or reduce domestic and family violence deaths in Queensland; to identify where services, both generic and specialist, worked well or failed, identifying key learnings and elements of good practice in the prevention of domestic and family violence deaths; to make recommendations to government for tangible improvements to systems, policies, procedures and strategies to try to prevent further domestic and family violence related deaths; and to monitor the implementation of recommendations.

The bill provides the board with the power to do all things necessary or convenient to perform these functions effectively including: engaging persons with appropriate qualifications to conduct research and prepare expert reports for the board; and accessing information necessary to perform its functions. Under the bill the board may give written notice to a prescribed entity who has custody or control of the information, requiring the person to give the information to the board and, if the information is contained in a document, to allow the board to inspect the document and take a copy of it. A maximum penalty of 100 penalty units may be imposed for failure to comply with the notice without reasonable excuse. Indemnity provisions have been included in the bill to ensure that a prescribed entity is not liable civilly, criminally or under an administrative process for giving the information.

The bill also allows for the board to enter into an arrangement about the exchange of information between a coroner and the board and with other jurisdictions about matters relating to the board's functions. These information-sharing provisions are critical to ensuring the board can effectively discharge its functions. To ensure the board is also meeting its objectives, the bill requires the board to provide an annual report in relation to the board's performance which must be tabled by the minister administering the Coroners Act within one month after receiving it. The board may also report to the minister administering the Coroners Act about matters arising from the performance of the board's functions.

The passage of this bill is central to ensure that the independent board working with the enhanced death review unit within the Office of the State Coroner can identify systemic risk factors that may place a person at increased risk of death or injury in a relationship, identify any existing gaps in services provided and how services and responses to victims of domestic violence can be improved with a view to reducing the number of domestic and family violence related deaths in future.

This bill provides a strong framework from which to effect real change and prevent future domestic and family violence deaths by delivering quickly on the government's commitment to implement key priority recommendations of the special task force. I look forward to working with stakeholders and experts in this area and I encourage them to participate in the parliamentary committee process. I am very pleased to commend the bill to the House.>

First Reading

Hon. YM D'ATH (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Training and Skills) (2.43 pm): 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 Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Grace): Order! In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee.

~~← APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL~~

~~APPROPRIATION BILL~~

~~Consideration in Detail (Cognate Debate)~~

~~Resumed from p. 1739.~~


~~Appropriation Bill~~

~~Finance and Administration Committee~~

~~Report No. 11~~

~~**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Grace): The question is~~

~~That report No. 11 of the Finance and Administration Committee be adopted.~~

 ~~**Ms FARMER** (Bulimba ALP) (2.47 pm): As chair of the Finance and Administration Committee, I rise to speak on the appropriation for the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, the arts and Treasury incorporating Employment, Industrial Relations and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships. There was a lot to fix in this budget. Campbell Newman and his colleagues did damage to Queensland when they were in government. They slashed front-line services, unemployment was at its highest in 11 years, business and consumer confidence was down, and Queenslanders had lost faith in the integrity and accountability of government. That is why this budget is so important and why this year's estimates process itself is important.~~

~~I congratulate the Premier and the Treasurer on a budget which not only works to restore much of the damage that was done to Queensland over the three years of the LNP government but also is a plan to take Queensland forward. It delivers on Labor's election promises without selling assets and without sacking workers. The budget delivers on jobs now and jobs for the future, and with growth averaging over four per cent per annum it is no surprise that it delivers the biggest surplus in a decade, with \$1.2 billion forecast for 2015-16 and combined surpluses of \$6.9 billion over the next four years.~~

~~It is a budget applauded by interest groups, businesses and ordinary Queenslanders right across the state, and the results are already apparent with business and consumer confidence continuing to grow. Since the state election, there has been growth of over 28,000 jobs in Queensland. This is testament to the work that has been done in the last eight months to get Queensland back on track.~~

~~Importantly, the budget restores the front-line services so savaged during the Newman years, allocating \$14.2 billion to Health and \$12.4 billion to Education. This will allow for more nurses and more teachers. Little did we know during the estimates hearings just how sharply we would feel right now the need for \$31.3 million to implement all 140 recommendations contained in the *Not now, not ever* report into domestic violence. I know that everyone in this House supports that. It was very good to see in the budget the commitment of \$173 million to restore Queensland's position as the national leader in the arts. Upon election, Campbell Newman flagged pretty early on what he thought of the arts by slashing the Premier's literary awards, and it went downhill from there.~~

~~At the estimates hearing the minister said he deliberately put the 'P' back into DATSIP, the Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, to emphasise that partnerships are essential to how this government does business and that is clearly how he will be operating. His~~