



Speech by

**Margaret Keech**

**MEMBER FOR ALBERT**

Hansard Tuesday, 19 May 2009

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## **PARLIAMENT OF QUEENSLAND AMENDMENT BILL**

**Mrs KEECH** (Albert—ALP) (6.00 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Premier's Parliament of Queensland Amendment Bill 2009. Since the recent election, the Premier and her government have undertaken a series of reforms to modernise the functions of the Queensland government. For example, the government has moved to abolish more than 100 boards, committees and statutory authorities in a sweeping move to reduce bureaucracy and to slash unnecessary red tape. The Parliament of Queensland Amendment Bill 2009 gives effect to the Premier's objective to reform the parliamentary committee system to produce better policy and better legislation for the people of Queensland.

I am a very strong supporter of the need to maintain and protect our parliamentary procedures and traditions. But I also know that the people of the electorate of Albert, which I have the privilege to represent in this place, expect that as a government and as a parliament we need to acknowledge that a system that has worked well for many decades can always be improved. That is why I strongly support the Premier's bill, because institutions such as parliament need to be reformed. It needs to be refreshed to ensure that the workings of the House continue to keep pace with the needs of a modern Queensland.

This bill and the related resolution passed by the parliament during the last sittings give effect to the most significant restructure of the parliament's committee system in decades. The time for reform has well and truly come. I congratulate the Premier in particular on the formation of the new committees. Unlike the opposition, I have every confidence that those new committees of law, justice and safety; economic development; environment and resources; and social development will achieve their outcomes. I look forward to their deliberations on these very important issues.

I am very pleased to be a member of the Members' Ethics and Parliamentary Privileges Committee. I look forward to working with the chair, Kerry Shine, and all the other members of the committee—both government and non-government members. Like the member for Nicklin, who I have had the pleasure of working with on the Scrutiny of Legislation Committee, I agree that previous committees have served the people of Queensland well. But we should not stand still when we have a very rare and unique opportunity for parliamentary reform in our parliamentary committees. Following the recent election there are now 19 new faces in this place. Each of those members brings new ideas and fresh ways of looking at issues.

The failure of the Leader of the Opposition to fully support this bill shows exactly what he thinks of his new team, the 11 new Liberal National Party members, and shows what he thinks of their ability to work in a bipartisan way in strongly advocating not only their party's policy positions but also their own positions. Contrary to the argument put by the opposition members, this new committee structure that is proposed by the bill enhances the opportunities available for all members to contribute to the development of solutions to the complex social and environmental issues Queensland and Queenslanders are facing. I support wholeheartedly the reform of the committee structure and the Premier's bill.