Speech by

Hon. Cameron Dick

MEMBER FOR GREENSLOPES

Hansard Wednesday, 19 May 2010

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Law Week

Hon. CR DICK (Greenslopes—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Industrial Relations) (10.13 am): This week is Law Week, a very important part of the legal calendar in Queensland and the flagship annual event for law and justice issues. This year's theme is 'Law and justice in your community', which brings together many activities aiming to raise awareness and promote greater understanding of the law, the justice system and the legal profession in Queensland.

Events are taking place Queensland-wide—from mock trials by James Cook University students in Townsville to the Brisbane Magistrates Court Open Day this Saturday, 22 May. Other events are being held in Mount Isa, Gladstone, Mackay, Maroochydore, Pomona and Ipswich. Courthouses all over the state are organising activities such as court tours, information sessions, student visits, mock trials and mediations, and free legal advice.

Events have included the Queensland Public Interest Law Clearing House's Walk for Justice, which I took part in on Monday. I was joined in that walk by the member for Barron River, and I thank him for his participation in that event. The walk started at the current Law Courts complex in George Street. Participants walked past the new Supreme and District Courts complex, which is under construction. We then proceeded over the Kurilpa Bridge—proudly built by this government—along South Bank, then back over the Goodwill Bridge—also proudly built by this government—and through the Botanical Gardens to Old Government House. I also thank the member for Southern Downs for participating in the walk and for crossing those two bridges, which have been the subject of such vehement criticism over such a long period of time by the state opposition.

I will also be heading off during today's lunch break to participate in Legal Aid Queensland's Hypothetical at the Banco Court in the Supreme Court building. This hypothetical promises to be a lively discussion on ways the legal system in Queensland deals with law-breakers who have a substance abuse problem, including how they are sentenced. The public have been invited to be the judge. After hearing all the facts in the case, attendees will decide on an appropriate sentence. The hypothetical is being moderated by Nova radio personality Meshel Laurie, who will be accompanied by a panel of experts, including the Chief Justice of Queensland, the Hon. Paul de Jersey, and the Chief Magistrate, Judge Brendan Butler. I thank Meshel and all of the experts for volunteering to participate in this important event. The hypothetical is a great place for people to ask questions about the issues that confront our courts, prisons and community services each and every day.

Another focus of Law Week is to raise awareness of legal issues affecting young people and to provide legal resources to Queensland students. Just last week I attended a terrific mock trial at the Holland Park Magistrates Court conducted by Mount Gravatt State High School students from the Greenslopes electorate who were keen to learn more about careers in the law, as well as the Queensland justice system. I encourage everybody to take part in Queensland's Law Week in some way or another. To find out more about events in your local area, visit www.lawweek.qld.gov.au or contact your local courthouse.