




Speech by

Hon. Jarrod Bleijie

MEMBER FOR KAWANA

Hansard Thursday, 23 August 2012

PUBLIC SERVICE AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Hon. JP BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (4.00 pm): I move—
That the bill be now read a second time.

On behalf of the Premier, I thank the Finance and Administration Committee for its prompt consideration of the Public Service and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012. The committee noted the reasons for the bill and the four pieces of legislation the bill amends. I also note that the opposition has attached a dissenting report to the committee report. However, it has not indicated its reasons for dissent. I look forward to hearing its contributions during the debate.

The committee's only recommendation was that the bill be passed, and the government is happy with that recommendation. I also table an erratum to the explanatory notes that clarifies that legal representation is available in proceedings before the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission under section 284 of the Industrial Relations Act 1999.

Tabled paper: Public Service and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012, erratum to explanatory notes [\[850\]](#).

The purpose of the Public Service and Other Legislation Amendment Bill is to improve the operation of existing Public Service legislation through improved alignment and efficiencies in discharging its public sector integrity functions. In relation to the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission, the bill will facilitate the orderly and expeditious exercise of its jurisdiction and powers, and will also expand parties' rights to have legal representation in matters that appear before it.

The bill's objectives will be achieved through amendments to the Public Service Act 2008, the Public Sector Ethics Act 1994, the Public Interest Disclosure Act 2010 and the Industrial Relations Act 1999. I will also be moving further amendments to the bill relating to the Industrial Relations Act 1999 and the Public Service Act 2008. We know from the bill that the particular provisions in relation to the legislation deal with public sector accountability, as explained in the introductory speech by the honourable the Premier, while at the same time streamline processes to ensure that acts are administered as efficiently and effectively as possible.

It completes the final stage of the transition for the Public Service appeals function from the commission to the QIRC. It also deals with the government's intention and direction that the Public Service Commission drive our public sector efficiency agenda. The bill completes the process by transferring the administrative functions of those appeals, as I have indicated. It also replaces and deals with issues of ethics in the Public Service and the training requirements.

The oversight agency for public interest disclosures will now be the Queensland Ombudsman. The amendments with respect to the Industrial Relations Act deal with streamlining the administrative function of the QIRC by allocating responsibility for the administration of the commission from the president to the vice president including the allocation of the commission's business. Finally, it allows a discretion to allow legal representation where the commission is satisfied it is appropriate for a party to be represented by a lawyer.

As I have indicated, I will be moving some amendments in relation to the Industrial Relations Act and the Public Service Act. Since the introduction of the Public Service and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, it has become apparent that further amendments are required for the efficient transfer of the administration functions for the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission president to the vice president. These changes are technical in nature. Additional amendments will also be moved to legislate the government's election commitment to have a Public Service that our state can afford and that delivers for Queenslanders. These amendment will also provide additional protection of public servants' personal information. I commend the bill to the House.