



Speech by


**Jo-Ann Miller**

**MEMBER FOR BUNDAMBA**

Hansard Thursday, 23 August 2012

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## **PUBLIC SERVICE AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mrs MILLER** (Bundamba—ALP) (5.45 pm): I wish to raise in this House the ideological hatred of those opposite for the workers of Queensland. The Tories opposite hate workers. While they hate them, I want to point out that they are public servants, not public serfs. That is what you lot over there think of them. You think they are serfs.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Ruthenberg): Order! I ask the member to address her comments through the chair and refrain from using the word 'you'.

**Mrs MILLER:** The Newman LNP government wants to drag Queensland back into the dark ages, back to the days when they were well-to-do and they had serfs and treated them like slaves. While they reposition the goalposts on what front-line services are, while they slash and burn the jobs of hardworking Queenslanders, while they strip away the conditions of workers like ambos and fires, while they attempt to remove the right to strike, while they abolish services aimed at helping hardworking Queenslanders, they again show that they are driven by ideology—an ideology that punishes the workers of Queensland at the behest of the big end of town, an ideology which puts the budget line ahead of front-line services for Queenslanders, an ideology that punishes hardworking Queenslanders, an ideology that is driving Queenslanders to stress, desperation and depression, an ideology that is forcing people to take their kids out of Catholic and independent schools, an ideology that is now forcing people to sell their homes, an ideology that sends workers and their families to doctors to get treatment for anxiety and depression and an ideology that takes away the dignity of working public servants in this state.

This is a government that lets its ideology rule over good management, and it treats public servants—teachers, school cleaners, paramedics, firefighters and social workers—like serfs. It gives them no say and undertakes no consultation. But they have a voice and they have a say, and next election they will have a vote as well. While Campbell Newman—

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! There is way too much interjection going on. I ask the members in the House to please calm it down and listen to the speaker. I call the member for Bundamba.

**Mrs MILLER:** Thank you for your protection, Mr Deputy Speaker. While Campbell Newman clearly is not listening, people are certainly listening to him. The more they hear, the more they fear. He told public servants that they had nothing to fear. He told them that there would be more, not fewer, public servants. He told them to trust him, hand on heart. This is why they are so angry. This is why the Public Service is so upset and so disgusted with this LNP government. It feels like it has been taken for a ride—and, let me tell you, it has.

This government clearly does not understand the anxiety and stress that its ideological ambush of Public Service careers has caused. If it really listened to Queenslanders it would be sharing the tears, as I have done—and as I have known, when I was sacked by you lot in 1996, when you were in government—with the workers who have given years of dedicated service to the public of Queensland as the LNP rips the guts out of them as public servants in Queensland.

The ideological purge of the Public Service undertaken by Newman and the henchmen has caused workers to lose their dignity—the dignity of a job, the dignity to help support their families, pay a mortgage, pay the rent, pay off their car, take the kids to the beach, take their partner to the movies, send their kids to school, pay for the kids' footy fees and dancing lessons, enjoy a beer with their mates, get their hair done, pay the vet bills, shop with the girls or grab a bunch of flowers for their wife on their way home from work. Instead, we have public servants in fear and anxiety going to their GPs. I have heard about public servants vomiting at work, bursting into tears as their co-workers leave and feeling guilty as they go and their work environments being so depressing that they are like a morgue, and this is a workplace that they used to love as they served the people of Queensland. This appalling treatment has got the people listening, got them listening to the LNP because they certainly know what they will be doing next time. They are listening when they are told in this House that their voices are not worthy when they express their democratic right outside this House. I table for this House 78 copies of the ReachTEL poll—one for each and every one of you, because I tell you what: you will not be getting it from your party.

*Tabled paper:* ReachTEL poll, conducted on 22 August 2012, titled 'Newman support update: Sandgate, Townsville and Brisbane Central' [851].

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Ruthenberg): Order! I have asked the member before to address her comments through the chair. I am going to ask you again to direct your comments through the chair and not use the word 'you'.

**Mrs MILLER:** Thank you very much. It clearly shows what the people of Queensland think of this LNP government and its ideological purge of public servants and the front-line services that they deliver. Let us just have a look at what they think of legislation like this. Some 79.1 per cent of respondents in Sandgate said that they support local Public Service jobs and that these services should be the primary focus. In Townsville—where the LNP made front-line staff at Townsville Hospital take leave—the figure was 77.8 per cent. In Brisbane Central—where hospital staff were forced to bring in their own tea bags, for heaven's sake—it was 70 per cent. When they hear another example of this ideological purge of the public sector today, they understand—the public servants and the people of Queensland understand—that it is all smoke and mirrors and political spin. When Queenslanders were asked if the Newman LNP government's ideological purge had gone too far, they again showed that they listen when this government does not listen to them. In fact, in Sandgate 66.6 per cent of the people say that the purge has gone too far. I table the electoral pendulum for the benefit of all of the backbenchers here. In fact, most of you will not be here next time, so enjoy your time.

*Tabled paper:* Queensland State Political Pendulum—2012 State Election, updated on 27 May 2012, prepared by Jake Smith [852].

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mrs MILLER:** Sorry, Mr Deputy Speaker. I apologise.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you.

**Mrs MILLER:** So 53 per cent of people in Sandgate have listened to the mean and tricky LNP government and decided that Campbell Newman has not kept his election policies. Some 60 per cent of respondents listened to the government when the government stopped listening to them and have said that they are less likely to vote for it because of the performance of Campbell Newman.

This is an attack on Public Service workers. These are the people who stop your house from burning down, who look after your kids when they are at risk, who give CPR to grandma when she is crook, who flew helicopters to save Grantham residents when it was flooded, who teach kids how to write, who arrest bank robbers, who hold the hands of people when the doctor sees what is wrong with them in the emergency departments. That is who this government is attacking—hardworking, dedicated people who do the things that keep Queenslanders going. It is attacking the respect and dignity of a steady job that public servants have had for generations, because the Public Service has been a career—one that pays the bills and puts the food on the table.

In fact, the LNP government changes the goalposts so much that its incompetence shows through so many times that there are more holes in a footy field now than there are on a golf course. It is still trying to take the dignity and respect that job security provides public servants. That is what happens. The Labor Party believes in the rights of workers. We believe in your rights at work. This is in fact Campbell Newman's Work Choices for Queensland. That is what it is. This government cannot even consult with itself, because the backbench did not even know this was being brought on! These changes will allow, at the stroke of a pen, the contracting out of community services, of Community Safety staff, of school cleaners, of police support staff, of the Workplace Rights Office, of the Residential Tenancies Employing Office, of the staff of the Department of Transport and Main Roads, of emergency management helicopters. This is ill conceived, ideological and outrageous. This is Newman's Work Choices, and never forget it!

*(Time expired)*