




Speech by

Michael Crandon

MEMBER FOR COOMERA

Hansard Thursday, 21 June 2012

CIVIL PARTNERSHIPS AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr CRANDON** (Coomera—LNP) (8.15 pm): I rise to support the Civil Partnerships and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012. I think the operative word here is 'amendment'. We are making amendments necessary to satisfy various areas of the community and their beliefs and feelings on matters of this sort.

Earlier we heard the Leader of the Opposition talk about the government making a mockery of the committee system. Seriously, the Leader of the Opposition is talking about making a mockery of a committee system that her then government made a mockery of in the 53rd Parliament. We heard the member for Mackay talk about haste and ask what is the haste of putting this bill through now. Seriously, member for Mackay, what was the haste last year that meant that this bill had to come to the House as a private member's bill and not through the normal process? For the first time in the history of this place, as I understand it, a private member's bill was introduced by a member of the executive.

The then Treasurer did not have the support of his colleagues in the ministry; he had to bring in a private member's bill. He introduced the bill at a time when we had so much happening in the community—so many pressures, so many pieces of legislation that needed to be debated—and it was forced through. The rules of this place were bent and twisted by the then government to ensure that bill passed through this House in a hasty fashion—and the member for Mackay talks about haste in terms of bringing this amendment bill forward!

I say to the member for Mackay: I am a Christian and I have friends in the gay community. I have spoken to people in the gay community about their true beliefs. As was brought to the attention of the House by the Minister for Health, not all people on all sides of this debate believe the same things. Some people are interested in one thing only—and this is the perspective that I want to come from. The perspective I want to come from is people's rights. What are their rights?

A dear friend of mine passed away some 18 months ago. Jim and his partner—a same-sex couple—were passionate about one another. They were lovely, lovely people. Jim passed away quite unexpectedly. Fortunately for Jim's partner, the rest of his family understood their relationship and did not create any problems for him in relation to the estate and the estate passing to him. He was one of the fortunate ones.

My background is 22 years in financial planning and I can assure the House that in that time—and the Leader of the Opposition may think it is funny to be talking about these serious matters; by all means laugh if you like—I saw many cases where not only same-sex couples but people who were living together in a male and female relationship were denied their entitlements on the unexpected death of their partner because the rest of the family vehemently disagreed with their relationship. All sorts of stories would come out—'No, she was his housekeeper,' 'No, they were two bachelors, just good friends.' Whatever else, the story was about money. That is all it was about. It was the money that the family saw themselves losing because of this relationship that was a bona fide, genuine, loving relationship between two people.

The position I am coming from with this is that we are not talking about whether or not we want to mimic marriage here. As a Christian, I am against that concept of mimicking a marriage.

Ms Trad interjected.

Mr CRANDON: But what I am not against, member for South Brisbane, is this: I am not against people having the right to pass their assets from one to the other or to deal with the individual who is in some sort of a serious health situation—in a coma, in a hospital—and be regarded as the individual that is thought of as their partner, as their next of kin. That is the position I am coming from.

I ask all of those people who purport to be Christians out there in the marketplace and who have been making noise about this issue to think about the people who it really affects. The people that this legislation really affects are those same-sex couples and indeed partners—whether they are male and female partners as well—who have the opportunity now to come to a court and to register, if you like, their interest in one another, to formally register, to legally register—

A further incident having occurred in the public gallery—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Berry): Order! Security, please remove that man from the gallery. For those who arrived after the commencement of the debate, I will give the third warning. This is a debate. Members are expressing their views—some of which you may accept, some of which you may not. Please respect the speakers. If in fact there is any outburst again, I will clear the gallery.

Mr CRANDON: As I was saying—and I am drawing my contribution on this debate to a close—I simply want to take the opportunity to ask all Queenslanders and all of our society to understand that there are different views taken by different people in our community but that at the end of the day there are loving, genuine relationships out there, whether they are between a man and a woman or whether they are same-sex relationships, that deserve the financial protection, and those people deserve the opportunity to be regarded as the next of kin in an emergency health situation. Those people are the ones and the only ones at the end of the day who are affected by this legislation—hence the reason this government has done the right thing in retaining this legislation on the books and, if you like, has appreciated the attitudes of some people, me included, who do not agree with the concept of marriage by simply taking that aspect out of the bill and allowing those people to have the opportunity to deal with one another's life needs in a health situation or financial situation. I commend the bill to the House.