



Speech by


**Peter Wellington**

**MEMBER FOR NICKLIN**

Hansard Thursday, 2 August 2012

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## **CRIMINAL LAW (FALSE EVIDENCE BEFORE PARLIAMENT) AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mr WELLINGTON** (Nicklin—Ind) (11.58 am): I thank the government for allowing me the opportunity to jump the queue to speak on this bill because I have to get to an Ethics Committee meeting. I have listened to many of the speeches on this bill and the contribution made by the member for Gaven was one that I thought would be appropriate for me to follow. I do not intend to comment on comments made by politicians when Mr Nuttall was a member of parliament and the matters that led to the change in the law. Suffice it to say I think it unfortunate that we now have to introduce this amendment to make it an offence for a politician to lie. Hopefully, it will be a warning for everyone of the importance of telling the truth at all times and that if you make a mistake you apologise as soon as you can.

Before I resume my seat, I also put on the record that my position is consistent. I can certainly recall when parliament was recalled. We had to rush back for that special sitting of parliament that other members have already spoken about. I hope that the intent of this amendment will flow through to political candidates in elections. It just amazes me that sometimes we can be so righteous in the way we require everyone to perform in parliament, yet in the lead-up to an election campaign—the one we have just been involved in—some quite outrageous, appalling allegations and comments were made that clearly should not be allowed. I raised one matter with the Electoral Commission that clearly was not true and was clearly defamatory. It was clearly false and it was clearly a lie. When I raised that matter with the Electoral Commission it effectively said, 'Here's a High Court decision. You can't do anything for these technical reasons.'

Many members have spoken about lifting standards. I put on the record that, if the government and other members of parliament really want to lift the standards, we should all jolly well make sure that the candidates—be they candidates for the Liberal National Party, the candidates for the Labor Party, the candidates for Bob Katter's Australian Party, or Independents; anyone—step up to those standards, be truthful, be honest. I resume my seat and look forward to the bill proceeding to the final vote.