




Speech By
Annastacia Palaszczuk

MEMBER FOR INALA

RESTORING FAIRNESS FOR GOVERNMENT WORKERS BILL

Introduction

 **Ms PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Leader of the Opposition) (2.30 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the Industrial Relations Act 1999 and the Public Service Act 2008 for particular purposes. I table the bill and explanatory notes. I nominate the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Restoring Fairness for Government Workers Bill 2013 [\[2561\]](#).

Tabled paper: Restoring Fairness for Government Workers Bill 2013, explanatory notes [\[2562\]](#).

The Restoring Fairness for Government Workers Bill seeks to repair one of the most fundamental breaches of trust perpetrated by the Liberal National Party on government workers in Queensland. On 4 April 2011, soon after becoming leader of the LNP, Campbell Newman declared, 'The Public Service has nothing to fear from me.' However, within six months of winning the election, the Newman LNP government betrayed many government workers by wielding its massive majority and removing a range of employment conditions that helped ensure an impartial Public Service. Those provisions included protections against contracting out, employment security provisions, organisational change provisions and termination, change and redundancy provisions. The Newman government also watered down the independence of the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission.

We now know why the Newman government made those changes. It was to make it easier to sack 14,000 government workers, including front-line staff such as nurses, doctors and teachers, and to slash services. Today, the Newman government did not rule out cutting even more jobs in next month's budget. Last year in this chamber we witnessed the extraordinary situation when, without warning, the Attorney-General introduced a raft of late changes. At the time, the opposition described the move as disgraceful and the passage of time has not at all altered our view.

Those changes were made by the Newman government without consultation or prior notice and were in direct contravention of guarantees made by Campbell Newman prior to the 2012 state election. In the interests of hardworking government staff in this state, the opposition has introduced the Restoring Fairness for Government Workers Bill. This bill seeks to restore the industrial conditions that were negotiated between the state government and public sector employees and their unions before the cold-hearted and callous actions of the Newman government. The bill seeks to restore agreed industrial conditions in enterprise bargaining agreements. There is no fairness in a legislative framework that allows for agreed industrial conditions to be overridden at the stroke of a pen. The bill also makes changes to restore independence to the Industrial Relations Commission.

The Labor opposition's bill will restore the conditions for government workers that were stripped away. Those conditions acknowledge the professionalism of government workers and ensure that the Public Service has the freedom to provide the government with frank and fearless advice. Despite his

half-baked attempts to crush unions, the labour movement is alive and well and, right across Queensland, we will march together this Sunday, the real Labour Day, to show the Premier exactly what workers think of his government. I commend the bill to the House.

First Reading

Ms PALASZCZUK (Inala—ALP) (Leader of the Opposition) (2.34 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

Question put—That the bill be now read a first time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

Referral to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mrs Cunningham): Order! In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee.