



Speech by

# Hon. Jarrod Bleijie


MEMBER FOR KAWANA

Hansard Wednesday, 13 February 2013

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## SUCCESSION TO THE CROWN BILL

### Introduction

 **Hon. JP BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (4.12 pm): I present a bill for an act to change the law relating to succession to the Crown, to validate certain marriages made void by the Royal Marriages Act 1772 of Great Britain, to repeal that act so far as it is part of the law of the state and make consequential amendments to other legislation. I table the bill and the explanatory notes. I nominate the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee to consider the bill.

*Tabled paper:* Succession to the Crown Bill 2013 [\[2072\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Succession to the Crown Bill 2013, explanatory notes [\[2073\]](#).

I am particularly pleased to introduce the Succession to the Crown Bill 2013. The bill brings about changes to the law in Queensland relating to the effect of gender and marriage on royal succession, consistently with changes being made to that law in the United Kingdom and in other Australian jurisdictions.

The government believes that succession to the Crown should rightly be gender neutral. Males and females should be treated equally in our present society and females should not be disadvantaged in the line to the throne as a result of outdated laws. The first-born surviving child should become the monarch regardless of gender.

At a Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in October 2011, the leaders of the 16 realms of which the sovereign is head of state agreed to two reforms to the rules of royal succession. On 25 July 2012, the Council of Australian Governments—COAG—confirmed Australia's support for changes to the rules for royal succession, as previously agreed to in October 2011 by the leaders of the 16 realms of which the Queen is sovereign.

The Australian, states and territories governments have agreed to support three reforms to the rules on royal succession proposed by the government of the United Kingdom, including to allow for succession regardless of gender, to remove the bar on succession for an heir and successor of the sovereign who marries a Roman Catholic, and to limit the requirement for the sovereign's consent to the marriage.

The main objective of this bill is to ensure that succession to the Crown is not dependent on gender. The bill provides that, in determining the succession to the Crown, the gender of a person born after 28 October 2011 does not give that person, or that person's descendants, precedence over any other. Further, this bill will remove the disqualification from succeeding to the Crown, or from possessing it, arising from marriage to a person of Roman Catholic faith; and limits the requirement for the sovereign's consent to royal marriages to the first six individuals in the line of succession. The bill would thus replace the rule under the Royal Marriages Act 1772 under which any descendant of King George II must seek the reigning monarch's consent before marrying, without which their marriage is void, and would repeal that act.

I note that changes to these laws will not affect the everyday lives of Queenslanders. However, the changes bring the laws regarding royal succession in line with a modern and progressive society. As


highlighted at the Council of Australian Governments meeting on 7 December 2012, both the Australian and state and territory governments fully support the changes to the rules of royal succession in Australia.

The government remains committed to preserving Queensland's longstanding ties and direct relationship with the Crown. It is for this reason that the government has decided to give effect to the measures in the United Kingdom Succession to the Crown Bill in line with an approach involving separate, substantially uniform and coordinated state legislation and complementary Australian legislation by introducing a separate Queensland bill. Queensland reserves its right as a sovereign state to amend its own laws regarding royal succession. Queensland considers its approach reflects its full commitment to implementing these important changes to the rules of royal succession whilst at the same time ensuring its longstanding ties and direct relationship with the Crown is preserved.

In presenting this bill, I note that the United Kingdom Succession to the Crown Bill has passed through the House of Commons and is yet to be considered by the House of Lords. It is not the intention of the government to proclaim the commencement of the bill until after the United Kingdom Succession to the Crown Bill has commenced.

In conclusion, it is appropriate that this measure be introduced so soon after the conclusion of Her Majesty the Queen's Diamond Jubilee year and within a week of the anniversary of Her Majesty's accession to the throne on 6 February 1952. I commend the bill to the House.

### **First Reading**

 **Hon. JP BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (4.17 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**

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Dr Robinson): Order! In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee.

### **Portfolio Committee, Reporting Date**

 **Hon. JP BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (4.17 pm), by leave, without notice: I move—

That, under the provisions of standing order 136, the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee report to the House on the Succession to the Crown Bill by 27 February 2013.