




Speech By
Yvette D'Ath

MEMBER FOR REDCLIFFE

Record of Proceedings, 3 April 2014

MEMBER'S STATEMENT

State Schools, Cleaners

 **Ms D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (2.58 pm): I rise to speak about the important people doing work in our wonderful state schools across Queensland. Of course we know our principals and teachers are critical to delivering the fantastic work for and education of our young students and supporting those school families across Queensland, but I also want to acknowledge the important work that is done by our cleaners in our great schools. Of course, those cleaners work tirelessly in our local schools. Currently there are over 5,700 cleaners in our state schools. Those cleaners are predominantly women, many over the age of 50—the majority are over the age of 45—and on an average have worked 10 or 15 years for the education system and some have been there well in excess of 25 years. We should certainly be valuing that contribution that is made by these wonderful cleaners.

Why is their work so important? These are the people who are first to the school and last to leave. They are the ones who are there when our children are dropped off and picked up each day. This is particularly important when children are dropped off early or picked up late from school. The children know that they can trust the school cleaners. Many school cleaners have worked at their schools for decades. Along with teacher aides, they are the constant face at the school. They work in every part of the school, including staff rooms and the principal's office. They work in areas where they have access to sensitive information, so the fact that they are well known and trustworthy is extremely important. They are on hand through most parts of the day to do emergency clean-ups, ensuring that teachers and teacher aides can get on with the job of educating children. They also help out in after-hours events like their school fetes. Unfortunately, these cleaners are very concerned about their jobs. They have been in fear of the government's agenda for outsourcing across many sectors of the Public Service. I seek to table a non-conforming petition which calls on the Queensland government to ensure that school cleaners' jobs are not outsourced. Over 6,000 signatures are on that petition alone. United Voice has collected over 7,600 signatures.

Tabled paper: Non-conforming petition requesting that school cleaners jobs are not outsourced [[4872](#)].

Government members interjected.

Ms D'ATH: I hear those on the other side laughing, which I find absolutely offensive. This government should step up and give these cleaners an absolute guarantee that their jobs will not be outsourced. Do not be tricky with the wording; do not say 'only until the agreement expires'. Stand up and give them the commitment of job security.

(Time expired)