




Speech By
Hon. Anastacia Palaszczuk

MEMBER FOR INALA

Record of Proceedings, 17 September 2015

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Civil Partnerships

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (9.58 am): This morning the Attorney-General will introduce a bill to restore the right of any Queensland couple—of any gender, of any sexual orientation—to once again hold legal ceremonies to enter civil partnerships. We are restoring this right, which was first permitted under a Labor government and then taken away as one of the first acts of the former LNP government, because every Queensland couple, no matter their gender, should have this right. It is time to inject some maturity and dignity into the marriage debate. It is time to again allow heterosexual couples who might want to affirm their relationship but not take the step of actually getting married the right to do so. It is also time to once again allow same-sex couples that same right.

In 2011 the Labor government provided couples of any gender the right to get legal recognition of their relationship through registration with the Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages. We know how important that recognition is to all couples, not only because it gives their relationship official legal status but also because it allows them an official declaration of their love and devotion. It also allowed the right to participate in an official civil ceremony prior to having the relationship registered. However, in 2012, the former LNP government removed the right to participation in those civil partnership ceremonies and altered the law so that relationships would not be recognised as civil partnerships but as registered relationships.

My government is committed to restoring the civil partnership ceremony provisions so that couples of any gender can participate in an official ceremony and declare their dedication to each other. Those ceremonies and the symbolism they represent are important, particularly to people in same-sex relationships. The amendments to the bill to be introduced into this parliament today achieve what is fair. They offer equality and dignity for all Queenslanders. My government is committed to equality. My government is committed to fairness. Today we deliver on those commitments with this bill, which restores the very important right to couples who want to declare their commitment legally.