




Speech By  
**Hon. Anastacia Palaszczuk**

**MEMBER FOR INALA**

---

Record of Proceedings, 28 October 2015

## **ELECTORAL (REDISTRIBUTION COMMISSION) AND ANOTHER ACT AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (8.44 pm): I rise to make a contribution in the debate on the Electoral (Redistribution Commission) and Another Act Amendment Bill 2015. As the Attorney-General has already advised, the government is deeply opposed to this bill. I go back to when my government introduced our first budget. Our first budget centred on jobs: creating jobs now and creating jobs for the future. On the day after the budget, the opposition came into this House. Was it a policy proposal that was put forward? No! Was it a commentary on the budget? No! It was a bill about having more politicians in this House. It was not about jobs for Queenslanders. I think that tonight Queenslanders and families would be absolutely appalled if they tuned in to watch a debate about the opposition wanting to create more politicians in this state. Why is this House not debating issues around health, education, service delivery or cost-of-living issues? This LNP opposition is focused on one thing, which is themselves.

**Mr Walker** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** My greatest fear, member for Mansfield, was if Campbell Newman had been re-elected to this place there would be a change to the electoral boundaries in this state. That was my greatest fear. Even Campbell Newman did not put in front of this House what the member for Mansfield has introduced on behalf of the opposition. We have clearly seen an attempt to bring back Joh's gerrymander in this state. Each and every one of them should be totally and utterly ashamed. I ask the member for Mansfield: where have the principles of the Liberals gone? They have gone forever from this House.

I remember growing up in the Joh Bjelke-Petersen era and I want to forget it. Those were the bad old days. I remember attending rallies. People used to be silenced. What the opposition is proposing is wrong and it is disgraceful. My government will stand up for the principles of integrity, accountability and a fair electoral system. That is what the people of Queensland elected us to do.

I put this to the House and the people of Queensland: when, during the election campaign, did any one of those opposite stand up and pledge that they were going to introduce a bill to change the electoral system in this state? Not once did they do that. Not once did we hear any election commitment in relation to changing the electoral system in this state.

Tony Fitzgerald would be shocked at what is before the House tonight. Let us go back in history and look at the Fitzgerald reforms. The Fitzgerald report outlined the problem when the electoral system does not have the confidence of the community. This bill does not have the confidence of the community. It was never put to an election. It was never debated in the election campaign. They are trying to sneak it through because they are desperate to get power in this state. They cannot do it through the fair and democratic system, so they want to create more jobs for more politicians and change the zonal system, bringing back the gerrymander.

In his report, Mr Fitzgerald pointed out—

A fundamental tenet of the established system of parliamentary democracy is that public opinion is given effect by regular, free, fair elections following open debate.

A Government in our political system which achieves office by means other than free and fair elections lacks legitimate political authority over that system.

He went on to say—

The fairness of the electoral process in Queensland is widely questioned. The concerns which are most often stated focus broadly upon the electoral boundaries, which are seen as distorted in favour of the present Government, so as to allow it to retain power with minority support.

That is what was happening and, following the changes recommended by EARC, a fair electoral system was put in place.

I have heard arguments in here about the larger electorates. When I travel around the state I know how hard the members of each and every electorate in this state work. Not once has one of those members complained to me about not being able to do their job and represent the people of Queensland in this House—not once. The answer is that we can always look at additional resources where they are needed. We heard from the Attorney-General that when she was a federal member of parliament she represented 90,000 people and had four staff. I have not heard any member from those larger electorates say they cannot do their job. What we are seeing tonight is a cunning plan by those opposite.

**Ms Simpson:** Have you ever slept in your car to get across your electorate?

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Ryan): Order! Member for Maroochydore, your interjections are not being accepted—

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** As the former Speaker, I would have thought you would have known better.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! Premier! Member for Maroochydore, I will warn you on the next occasion if you persist with your interjections.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Even Denver Beanland, a former Leader of the Liberal Party, said in 1991 that ‘the legislation does not adhere to the principle of one vote, one value. The Liberals back then even believed in one vote, one value. Those Liberals are gone.

The member for Mansfield should go and put to his electorate that he no longer supports one vote, one value in this state.

**Mr Walker:** We haven’t had one vote, one value for 30 years.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Go and put that to your electorate. I am happy to go and put it to your electorate and see what reaction I get.

The legislation we are considering tonight is clearly an attempt by those opposite to bring about changes to the electoral system and bring back the gerrymander.

**An opposition member** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** We all know who the Leader of the Opposition’s political hero is? We have heard that time and time again. The Leader of the Opposition’s political hero is Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen. Whichever mastermind of those opposite came up with this proposal is an absolute disgrace.

We have said very clearly that we are opposing this bill. It is unfortunate that it got to the stage where it was brought into this House. We do not support the creation of more politicians in this state. My government is focused on creating jobs. Today, we very clearly saw a market-led proposal that will create 1,300 jobs in South-East Queensland and relieve traffic congestion. That is what Queenslanders want to hear. They want to see that this government is delivering for families out there. They want to see jobs for their children. They want to see jobs in their communities. They want to see this government focused on them and not on ourselves. That is what each and every one of my members will do right across the state.

In conclusion, I want to say one thing to the member for Mansfield and the LNP: Sir Joh would be very, very proud of you. The rest of Queensland will be totally and utterly appalled.