




Speech By
Craig Crawford

MEMBER FOR BARRON RIVER

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HOLIDAYS AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr CRAWFORD** (Barron River—ALP) (2.45 pm): I rise today to support the Holidays and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015.

An honourable member interjected.

Mr CRAWFORD: Yes, I do. I take that interjection. Labour Day in Australia is known in many countries as International Workers' Day or May Day. It developed out of the eight-hour-day movement, which sought to allow for eight hours for work, eight hours for leisure and eight hours for sleep. 1 May was officially recognised in the United States as a day of demonstration in 1893.

Australia's May Day celebrations began in 1890, in 1891 in Barcaldine the shearers' strike and march occurred and in 1854 there was the widely recognised and publicised Eureka Stockade rebellion in Ballarat, Victoria, where miners and colonial forces clashed and history was created. This is the kind of history that defines us as Australian, as hardworking battlers standing up for what you believe in and standing together to take action for change. These are the attributes that Australians went to war with and the attributes that placed Australia on the world stage respected for courage, bravery and mateship and being proudly labelled 'diggers' and 'rats'.

Workers have a proud history in Australia of standing up for their right to have a safe workplace and a fair day's pay. Labour Day is a day for workers; it is not a day that can be placed anywhere in the calendar. It deserves the same respect as other key holidays such as Australia Day. It belongs in May, and those opposite had no right to move it. It should be left where it belongs and not used as a political football. Since 1901 Labour Day in Queensland has been celebrated consistently on the first Monday in May. The Queen's Birthday public holiday originated in 1912.

In September 2011 the Bligh government released a discussion paper titled *Getting the balance right: a proposal on holidays in Queensland* as part of a review into the state's holiday system because at that time Queensland was the only state not to have a statewide public holiday between mid-June and late December. I note that the member for Mansfield mentioned the online survey and I will mention it again. Out of 24,505 respondents, an overwhelming 85.4 per cent—or in excess of 19,000 people—supported moving the Queen's Birthday to the second half of the year. Despite this, despite history and despite the obvious will of Queenslanders, those opposite in the last parliament moved Labour Day in a move that could only be seen as an insult to workers and a direct attack on the union movement and workers in a bid to break the way workers collectively stand up for their rights. It did not work, and 31 January proved it.

As a government why would you intentionally attack your workers by undermining the importance of their day—not ours: theirs? Those opposite got it wrong. They shifted the wrong day, and today I am proud to be part of the Palaszczuk Labor government that rights the wrong. I support the bill.