




Speech By  
**Jennifer Howard**

**MEMBER FOR IPSWICH**

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**HOLIDAYS AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Ms HOWARD** (Ipswich—ALP) (3.37 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Holidays and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015. For 121 years, in Queensland Labour Day was celebrated at the beginning of May. The May observance of the workers' day outlasted Federation, two world wars and well over one century of social and political change. Next year will mark 125 years since the great shearers' strike of 1891, which directly led to the founding of the Australian Labor Party. It has been 125 years since Queensland's first Labour Day march on 1 May at Barcaldine. From 1891 to the advent of the Newman government in 2012, this day at the start of May has been a time to remember those who struggled to secure fair wages and working conditions. Those conditions include workplace health and safety provisions, an eight-hour working day and the principle of a fair day's pay for a fair day's work for men and women.

One of the first acts of the Newman LNP government was to trash that great Queensland tradition. Not even the Bjelke-Petersen government, during its long years of rule in Queensland, had the gall to move Labour Day from its historically significant date. The word 'conservative' can be defined as follows: believing in the value of established and traditional practices in politics and society. The LNP's contempt for the Labour Day tradition in Queensland has laid them bare for what they really are. These people are not conservatives; they are right-wing reactionaries hell-bent on redefining our state in their own twisted image. Through all of the Newman government's mass sackings and slashing of conditions, including the shameful erosion of rights for injured workers, nothing more neatly symbolises the LNP's contempt for the working people than this one spiteful act.

This is a day that means something to Queensland. This is a day that means something to the large crowd of workers and members of the great trade union movement who proudly march down the streets of Ipswich at the start of May every year. Even when the LNP trashed Queensland's Labour Day tradition, union members in Ipswich and around the state continued to march in May, leaving us with a holiday in October bereft of history and meaning. Every worker in Queensland has benefited from the struggle of those we remember on Labour Day in May. That is why I am proud to support the Holidays and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015.