




Speech By
Michael Crandon

MEMBER FOR COOMERA

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HOLIDAYS AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr CRANDON** (Coomera—LNP) (2.49 pm): I rise to make a few brief comments in relation to the Holidays and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015. I take note of the previous speaker's advice that, overwhelmingly, people supported moving the Queen's Birthday holiday. Since they were only asked about moving the Queen's Birthday holiday that may be fair enough. It would have been interesting if the survey had bothered to ask about both options.

An opposition member: They reckon Queensland can't handle multiple choice.

Mr CRANDON: I take that interjection. Report No. 6 of the 55th Parliament's Finance and Administration Committee reports on the review of this particular piece of legislation—rushed again. All of it is in a hurry. It has always been in a hurry; it always will be in a hurry. We have yet again done what we did last time. That is, we listened to all of the evidence and then those on the government side ignored 80 per cent of the evidence. We on this side supported the people of Queensland.

Interestingly, I found some research online from the union movement that back in 1993 the union movement was quite buoyant and growing—up until that time, anyway—with membership of around 40 per cent. I have just put the piece of paper down and lost it, but it shows that union membership was around 40 per cent of the workforce. I think the union website stopped updating the chart in 2011 because the chart showed membership going down, down, down. By 2011 it was down to 20 per cent. It had halved from the early nineties through to 2011. I have just been advised by one of my colleagues that union membership is now around 17 per cent.

What we are talking about here is a comparison between the union movement, which represents 17 per cent of Queensland workers, and the rest of Queensland. There are 4.6 million or 4.7 million people in Queensland. Seventeen per cent of the workforce is supportive of moving the Labour Day weekend back to May. No-one else in Australia bothers with it. I am sorry: the Northern Territory does, so we are trying to fall into line with the Northern Territory. Don't worry about the rest of Australia; we will fall into line with the Northern Territory! We will go out of kilter in relation to the rest of Australia, but that is the union movement's way. That is the government members' way of dealing with these things: 'What do you think, union members?' 'We think this.' 'Right. Thanks for that. We'll take that on board. That's the way we will vote in committee.'

Council representatives from right around the state came and talked to us about their issues and so forth. None of them was supportive of changing things around, but the union movement was supportive of changing things around. They must get, like, a five-to-one advantage over the rest of Queensland because the councils represent 100 per cent of Queenslanders. Every Queenslanders lives in a council area so councils represent 100 per cent. They all came to us with their issues, with their problems, with what their economic loss would be in relation to all of this. But that is okay, because the union—the 17 per cent of the workforce—wanted it to go this way so that is what will happen.

Mr Walker interjected.

Mr CRANDON: I take that interjection. With consultation after consultation, one sometimes wonders why we bother consulting with anyone but the unions, because the unions always win. Is that something those opposite would like?

Mr Russo interjected.

Mr CRANDON: I take the interjection. The preferred position of government members is that we only consult with the unions, that we only talk to the unions about anything and everything because the unions know everything. I need not go on.

I will make a few points in relation to some of the argument that was put forward. I have found the chart I was referring to earlier. It shows that in 1992 there was 40 per cent and it shows less than 20 per cent in 2011. I knew I had it somewhere. It looks good. I really am glad I found that.

Some of the arguments around moving the dates had to do with the Easter weekend not being relevant because it was held in March or early April, so I had a bit of a look. Over the next 30 years, 10 Easter weekends will fall in the second half of April. We all know that Anzac Day is 25 April. That will be there every year—year in, year out. I am not for one minute suggesting that people would be doing anything other than going to Anzac commemorations and what have you on that day. Ten of the next 30 Easter weekends fall in the second half of April, Anzac Day is on 25 April and then just a week or so later we have the Labour Day weekend, rather than having a five-week break—before all of this occurred—to the Queen's Birthday weekend and then celebrating Labour Day like everybody else in the country other than the Northern Territory, which celebrate it closer to the first weekend in October. I think Western Australia has it after the last weekend in September or something like that.

We reviewed all of the evidence. We had a look at it all. We had a bit of a chinwag about a few things. Then the government members threw all of that out, forgot all about that and voted with the unions yet again. It will be interesting to see when they stop voting with the unions. I look forward to the day that we have a bill come before this House that in committee we can actually sit down and talk about and actually vote on in support of all Queenslanders and not just those 17 per cent of the workforce that those opposite tend to focus on.

I will finish my contribution by thanking our secretariat and all those who took the time to communicate their views. I apologise to those people who were not union members, who did not support the union position, who did not support the government position, because it was a fait accompli. It did not matter what they said. They put wonderful, brilliant arguments forward but it was all for naught. It was all a waste of their effort. I hope this will not deter them from putting their views forward in the future. Of course, I also thank all of the members of the committee for their efforts. I look forward to working with them in the future for a much more balanced outcome on our bills.