




Speech By
Hon. Dr Steven Miles
MEMBER FOR MOUNT COOT-THA

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INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS (RESTORING FAIRNESS) AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Mount Coot-tha—ALP) (Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and Minister for National Parks and the Great Barrier Reef) (9.30 pm): It is with great pleasure that I rise to support the Industrial Relations (Restoring Fairness) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. The worst excesses of the previous government were demonstrated in its approach to public sector industrial relations. It was arrogant, it was against its own election promises, it was in disregard of the views of experts and stakeholders, and it laid bare the disdain and disrespect it had for its workforce. They tore up workplace conditions that had been negotiated, agreed to and settled on with employees. They scrapped employment security for Public Service workers and the principle that allowed public servants to give frank and fearless advice without fear of personal repercussions. They cruelly cut 14,000 jobs and left the rest to languish under the long shadow of their axe. They limited the ability of public sector workers to exercise one of the fundamental rights of workers around the world—that is, the right to collectively bargain. They imposed politically motivated restrictions on unions and meddled in their internal management.

I support this bill because it is a true Labor bill. It restores fairness to workers, re-establishes rights to collective bargaining and unfair dismissal where removed by those opposite, and it keeps the faith with voters by delivering on a key set of election promises. We are a government of our word. One of the specific election promises we made, which is delivered in this bill, is the restoration of fair conditions for our senior public sector doctors. My colleague Minister Fentiman has already spoken about this issue, so I will simply say that the war waged on doctors by the LNP government really was extraordinary. I am proud to support this bill, which will restore fair workplace conditions for our doctors.

I note the refusal of the LNP to engage with the actual issues in this bill and to listen to the concerns of their constituents who are calling on them to support the bill. It shows they have really failed to heed the lessons of their electoral defeat. They keep carrying on with this fake outrage about their new-found passion: the privacy rights of government workers. For the past three years they had no interest at all in any of the rights of government workers. Now, all of a sudden, they are deeply concerned about their privacy. I am proud to stand up for the rights of public sector workers and I am proud to commend this bill to the House.