




Speech By  
**Tim Nicholls**

**MEMBER FOR CLAYFIELD**

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Record of Proceedings, 3 June 2015

**WORKERS' COMPENSATION AND REHABILITATION (PROTECTING  
FIREFIGHTERS) AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mr NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (4.28 pm): I think in all of the debate that we have had so far on this bill, that of it that has been relevant at least, we have probably lost the point in terms of the report-back date and the point of the committees. The member for Greenslopes, not Greenslopes—

**Mr Bleijie:** Woodridge now.

**Mr NICHOLLS:** Woodridge—he has jumped around—was talking about what he thought might be motives and suspicions of the member for Kawana, of course applying his own standard. But the reality is that committees are not about the government and committees are not about the opposition. Committees are about the opportunity for members of the public to make a contribution to the debate about bills before the House. That is exactly what they were for.

The firefighters union had reached agreement on these very substantial matters with the previous LNP government. It was an open agreement, publicly displayed and announced by the then premier and the then minister. To argue that the union has no knowledge of these matters and is coming to them fresh without any knowledge is to argue that the sun does not rise in the east. That is the argument that is being put forward by those opposite on the government side.

Quite clearly, the union and their members regarded this as a matter of complete and utter significance. That is why they entered into long and fruitful negotiations that ended up in the agreement that was reached. This legislation implements that agreement. It astounds me that anyone on the government side would seek to slow down the process of appropriately protecting firefighters for doing their job and providing them with the protections that the member for Kawana's bill seeks to bring forward. Who knows when the next firefighter might succumb to the terrible disease of cancer that their work brings them into contact with? Yet those opposite seek to delay a remedy to provide them with protection on that basis. For that reason—

**Mr Rickuss** interjected.

**Mr Hinchliffe** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Member for Lockyer and Leader of the House, you have both had an opportunity to make your contribution.

**Mr NICHOLLS:** Here we clearly have a piece of legislation that is worthy, a concept that is worthy and, according to those opposite in government, they say they support but they want to delay—a piece of legislation that brings to fruition many months worth of negotiations and agreement with the firefighters union that they are not unaware of, that they know the details of and such legislation has been passed in other jurisdictions throughout Australia. Yet the government is seeking to delay a report-back date. We have a competent committee. We have 17 working days. We have hardworking staff. We have a union that wants to see it happen. We have an opposition that wants to see it happen. This motion to bring the return date forward ought to be supported by the House in the interests of the firefighters.