




Speech By
Hon. Yvette D'Ath

MEMBER FOR REDCLIFFE

Record of Proceedings, 3 December 2015

**RELATIONSHIPS (CIVIL PARTNERSHIPS) AND OTHER ACTS AMENDMENT
BILL**

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Training and Skills) (3.31 pm), in reply: I want to thank all the honourable members for their contribution to the debate on the Relationships (Civil Partnerships) and Other Acts Amendment Bill 2015. This bill delivers on the government's commitment to reinstate civil partnerships ceremonies. This is a good day for the people of Queensland. I am proud to deliver on the Palaszczuk government's commitment to do what is fair and what is right for Queenslanders.

I would like to thank those in the public gallery who are here today to show their support. I also recognise and thank the LGBTIQ community and also PFLAG for their ongoing advocacy right across this great state and country. For them this has been a long battle and I want to thank them for their tireless advocacy. I would also like to thank all my colleagues who have spoken in support of this bill today. Your words and your passion in the House demonstrate your support on this issue.

There has been a lot of work over many years to keep this issue in the minds of all Queenslanders. Let's hope this is the last time we have to have this debate in the Queensland parliament. Let's also hope these laws are here to stay. Whether this is about changes in the law or whether members are responding to shifts in public attitude, perhaps today can be the line in the sand that demonstrates Queensland has finally moved forward.

I would like to pay tribute and thank my colleagues for the respectful nature of today's debate. It is a credit to all of us. May we demonstrate today that Queensland is no longer the land that time forgot. Let's do away with this state's unfair reputation for being a backwater and demonstrate to one another and to this nation that we will stand up for what is right, for equality, for respect and for fairness. This bill reminds us that language and rituals matter when it comes to the most important relationships of our lives. Every loving couple should be able to recognise their love with a ceremony, recognised at law in front of friends and family. In a few short weeks, I will be celebrating my 22nd wedding anniversary.

The changes in terminology in this bill restore the dignity and the respect that all of our loving relationships deserve regardless of gender and sexuality. The decision by the previous government to repeal civil ceremonies caused real hurt in Queensland. Some people considered leaving, disenchanted by that decision. I want to reiterate to all Queensland couples that this is your home, this is where you belong and we want to see your relationship celebrated, recognised and respected. I am proud to bring forward this bill which rights the wrong that was done by the former government's amendments in 2012. This is a great moment for Queensland. In our hands is the potential to restore fairness, equality and respect to all the members of our community. This is a vital step and brings Queensland into a world that wholeheartedly embraces all of its citizens.

I urge all members of this House to think deeply and carefully in voting on this bill. Think about what is important and matters most in your life and the life of your family members. Think about the

opportunities and choices you want for your children and grandchildren. Think about whether you would want these opportunities and choices to be available to them should they fall in love with someone of the same sex. Think about how important it is that they feel acknowledged, valued and accepted. I once again thank all honourable members for their contribution during the debate. I commend the bill to the House.