




Speech By  
**Michael Crandon**

**MEMBER FOR COOMERA**

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**LIMITATIONS OF ACTIONS (INSTITUTIONAL CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE) AND  
OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL; LIMITATION OF ACTIONS AND  
OTHER LEGISLATION (CHILD ABUSE CIVIL PROCEEDINGS) AMENDMENT  
BILL**

 **Mr CRANDON** (Coomera—LNP) (3.22 pm): I rise to make a short contribution to the cognate debate in relation to the Limitation of Actions (Institutional Child Sexual Abuse) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016 and the Limitation of Actions and Other Legislation (Child Abuse Civil Proceedings) Amendment Bill, which were considered by the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee in its report No. 41, placed on the record of this House on 1 November.

I note that the government bill is unanimously supported by all members of the committee and that the committee is unanimously against the non-government bill being considered in the House. I also note the Attorney-General's in-principle support for one of the two recommendations that the non-government members put forward on page 6 of the report—

That the government Bill be amended to include the right to claim to sexual abuse victims, in circumstances other than an institutional sexual abuse setting.

I appreciate her in-principle support and I am sure that the shadow Attorney-General will be able to arrange for appropriate wording to satisfy the Attorney. I am sad, though, that we do not have the support of the Attorney-General for our second recommendation—

That the government Bill be amended to provide the courts, at their discretion, the right to re-open Deeds of Settlement which have been entered into, with respect to time barred sexual abuse claims.

Slave-master relationships have already been discussed, certainly by the shadow Attorney-General. There have been situations where someone was choofed off after being offered \$500 or \$1,000, whatever the amount might be. They were asked to sign something and told to go away and not bother them again. It is sad that in those circumstances we are going to lose the opportunity in this bill to reopen these deeds. I make the point, in making the recommendation that the non-government members put forward, that it would be at the discretion of the court. The court would have the opportunity to look at all of the circumstances and if it felt in the circumstances it would be appropriate to reopen the deeds it could reopen the deeds. We will see whether or not that particular recommendation gets up in the vote in the House.

I acknowledge the bravery of those many thousands who have suffered sexual abuse and have appeared before our committee and have appeared or are yet to appear before the royal commission. The royal commission's list of witnesses was closed on the last day of September, I believe, but the commission will continue well into next year listening to the stories and the evidence from those witnesses who have put their names forward.

Some months ago I attended a conference in Victoria where one of the commissioners spoke at length about the types of evidence that the committee was hearing. She spoke about the range of people and the difficulty for so many of those people to speak about the things that happened to them for many, many years after the occurrence. In that respect, going back some years to a situation where a parent may have found out and confronted the institution or the individual and as a result of that was bought off, if you like, at a very low cost, it is sad that we cannot redress that with the capacity to reopen those deeds.

I also acknowledge those who are no longer with us, many of them unable to live with the memory of what occurred; troubled throughout their lives, having lived with mental illness, drug abuse or alcohol abuse as a result of what happened to them. I acknowledge those who are unable to talk about what happened to them even today. Some of these events happened just a few years ago but others happened many, many years ago—10, 20, 30, 40, 50 years ago—and they still cannot bring themselves to talk about what happened to them. Their memories continue to affect their lives. In saying that, I also acknowledge that for many the event caused ongoing mental health issues, drug and alcohol abuse and eventually this came to their own offending behaviour as evidenced in a report that I read with interest recently, *Trends and issues in crime and criminal justice No. 440 June 2012*. It is an Australian Institute of Criminology publication. It is titled *Child sexual abuse and subsequent offending and victimisation: a 45 year follow-up study*. For the benefit of the House I will read the foreword—

Up to 30 percent of children experience childhood sexual abuse (CSA) and whether this impacts re-victimisation or offending as an adult has been the subject of numerous studies.

This study investigates whether a disproportionate number of CSA victims subsequently perpetrate offences and experience future victimisation compared with people who have not been sexually abused. In a sample of 2,759 CSA victims who were abused between 1964 and 1995, it was found CSA victims were almost five times more likely than the general population to be charged with any offence than their non-abused counterparts, with strongest associations found for sexual and violent offences.

In other words, they themselves became offenders in the same way as they had been offended against. The study continues—

CSA victims were also more likely to have been victims of crime, particularly crimes of a sexual or violent nature.

This research highlights the need for therapeutic interventions targeted at adolescent male CSA victims, particularly with regard to offender treatment programs, where many programs currently do not allow for exploration of offenders' own sexual victimisation.

I bring that to the attention of the House in the hope that the House notes that there is a need for therapeutic support and proceeds to ensure that support is provided in further changes that may be brought before us.

I do not believe it is necessary for me to go through the detail of the bills or through the detail of the report again. That has been well canvassed by the Attorney-General, the shadow Attorney-General and also the chair of the committee. In closing, I acknowledge there is a discussion paper that closed for submissions, I think on 25 October. I look forward to seeing additional changes and amendments come before us as a matter of urgency.

I thank my committee colleagues for their careful consideration of this matter and our secretariat, who did such a wonderful job in a very short time frame. We had something like six weeks to pull all of this together. The secretariat did a wonderful job in doing that. The support that we received from the department in relation to feedback and turning things around very quickly so that we could get answers to questions as needed was also greatly appreciated. The opposition supports the passing of the bill, with amendments.