




Speech By
Nikki Boyd

MEMBER FOR PINE RIVERS

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MULTICULTURAL RECOGNITION BILL

 **Miss BOYD** (Pine Rivers—ALP) (3.06 pm): We live in a community that is so culturally diverse and that is something that I am proud of—something I want to enhance, encourage and maximise. That is why being part of this committee examining this bill was so exciting. The sad reality in our community is that my sentiments are not always shared by others and, while I appreciate that others often have varied and diverse views, I also appreciate that there is an undertone of something else in our community. There is an undertone of intolerance through our communities—fear of the different or unknown, a fear I think some in politics should take responsibility for often perpetuating or accentuating. Ours is a multicultural community from our first people to those of many other cultures who have come to call Australia home. I am most proud of who we are when we embrace our diversity. What we know is that the evidence is indicating that the most disadvantaged from participating in our economy are Queensland's migrant population. Intolerance and inequity in our community are something that Labor in government is determined to address.

While I hold the view that people in our political sphere often domestically and internationally have impacted, particularly in recent years, on the community's attitudes surrounding multiculturalism, I believe that government has a role to play in promoting a unified, harmonious and inclusive Queensland. We play an integral part in setting Queensland on the right path. That starts today with this Multicultural Recognition Bill, with the Multicultural Queensland Charter, policy and action plan. It starts with creating awareness; implementing fair, inclusive policy; and ensuring that the outcomes are measured. It starts with the establishment of the Multicultural Queensland Advisory Council and continues with its work and recommendations. Real statistical data will be captured and utilised under this legislation to improve and strengthen targeted programs and services.

This bill focuses on harmony, inclusion and fairness—principles that the committee heard would impact directly in a meaningful way and targeted way on a micro level to many Queenslanders in their day-to-day lives. At the macro level it will better improve policy, programs and services and will place Queensland in a better position of overseas investment, trade and tourism. At its core this bill is based on proud Labor values and it is only Labor in government that will deliver these measures. It will make our community a better place. It will ensure that we have a better culture.

I want to recognise Minister Fentiman, who was the minister for multicultural affairs when this bill was introduced into the House, for her leadership and foresight. I am confident that Minister Grace will implement this bill to the extent that it will fulfil and, no doubt, exceed its aims and objectives.

I thank our tremendous committee staff—Karl, Lucy and Carla. I would also like to acknowledge all of the committee members past and present for their work to ensure that this legislation was interrogated and investigated to ensure that it could be practically implemented. It is obvious through the committee process that the community wants this bill. It is obvious through the committee process that the community needs this bill. I commend the bill to the House.