




Speech By  
**Hon. Grace Grace**

**MEMBER FOR BRISBANE CENTRAL**

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Record of Proceedings, 10 October 2017

## **CRIMINAL LAW (HISTORICAL HOMOSEXUAL CONVICTIONS EXPUNGEMENT) BILL**


 **Hon. G GRACE** (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (5.25 pm): I am delighted to rise to speak in support of the Criminal Law (Historical Homosexual Convictions Expungement) Bill 2017. There are times in our political careers when we feel very proud to stand in this place and reflect the views of our communities. As the member for Brisbane Central, an inner-city electorate with a high percentage of the LGBTI+ community, it is a delight to stand here today to fix a wrong of the past. It is historic for me and it gives me a great sense of pride to speak in support of this bill. This year's Pride march was one of the biggest that I have witnessed.

**Mr Bailey** interjected.

**Ms GRACE:** I take the interjection from Minister Bailey, who was with us on the day. It was fantastic to see the number of people who came out in support of the LGBTI+ community. They are proud of who they are, proud of their sexuality, proud of their community. They marched down the street chanting very loudly for marriage equality and a 'yes' vote, which we all supported. It was fantastic to have the Premier of the state lead that march. My understanding is she is the first Premier to have done so in the history of the march. The Deputy Premier and other members of this House also marched together down Brunswick Street to New Farm Park on a very hot day. The heat was nothing compared to the pride that we felt being part of that community. On that day I had many members of the community come up to me thanking us for what we have done.

I congratulate the Attorney-General on what we as a government have done to remedy many of the wrongs of the past when it comes to the LGBTI community. Let me rattle some of them off. We have removed the gay panic defence, one of the things that the LGBTI+ community have been asking for for quite some time. We have now equalised the age of consent. We now have same-sex adoption in the state. We also reinstated civil partnerships. As the Attorney-General knows, recently my hairdresser had a civil partnership ceremony at Warwick with his long-term partner, Luke. It was absolutely marvellous to go to that ceremony with all of his family. Everyone was very, very proud.

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 **Hon. G GRACE** (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (7.45 pm), continuing: I was speaking about my hairdresser, Eric, and his partner, Luke. Recently, I attended their civil ceremony. This government reinstated civil ceremonies. I can tell members that no-one at that ceremony in Warwick did not support 100 per cent the yes vote for marriage equality. Eric and Luke's love was just the same as that of any other couple. There was much joy in that place. Very proud parents were there celebrating the union of these two special people.

Another proud moment for me was when the Premier delivered the apology in the House in relation to the hurt of homosexuality convictions. I think that most of us on this side of the House, and I am sure on the other side, have that apology framed in our offices as one of the proud moments of being in this House.

I have been a supporter of the LGBTIQ+ community for many years. This bill rights a wrong for offences that involved homosexual activity which should never have occurred. I support wholeheartedly the amendments brought into this House by the Attorney-General and the administrative way in which we are going to expunge these convictions. It is sensitive and it acknowledges that what happened in the past not only hurt these people inside but also hurt their careers, hurt their families and hurt them in the community. That is enough hurt to this community. We have to bring about equality, we have to bring about justice and we have to bring about fairness for the LGBTIQ+ community.

Once again, I applaud the actions of the Attorney-General and the Palaszczuk government in all of the things we have done to ensure the LGBTIQ+ community is no longer marginalised and can come out proud like they did recently when the Premier and many others of us in this House marched with them down to New Farm Park. It will allow them to say, 'Enough is enough.' We will right the wrongs. It is a proud moment.

I congratulate the Attorney-General. She has done a wonderful job in this space. The community at that Pride rally in New Farm Park was 100 per cent behind everything that we have done, which I have talked about this evening. This is just another cog in that wheel for equality for the LGBTIQ+ community. We will continue to advocate for them. We will continue to do all that we can to right the wrongs of the past and to bring about true equality for a wonderful community. I commend the bill to the House.