




Speech By
Michael Crandon

MEMBER FOR COOMERA

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COURT AND CIVIL LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr CRANDON** (Coomera—LNP) (8.45 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the debate on the Court and Civil Legislation Amendment Bill 2017, which was considered by the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee. The committee has presented to the parliament its report No. 55. First of all, I thank the secretariat. We have been rather busy with several bills and reports running at the same time. Once again, the secretariat has come up trumps and done an extremely good job. I thank all committee members for the manner in which we dealt with this particular report.

Certainly the policy objectives of the bill are numerous. As has been mentioned several times, the bill proposes to make changes that will affect in excess of 30 pieces of legislation. As is noted in our report, much of the bill is based on the Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2014 that was introduced into the Queensland parliament on 26 November 2014 by the then attorney-general and minister for justice. Therefore, it is fairly obvious why we support much of the bill. Most stakeholders were also supportive of the Court and Civil Legislation Amendment Bill.

The areas of concern have already been well outlined by the member for Mansfield, so I will not go into that in detail. We appreciate that the Court and Civil Legislation Amendment Bill 2017 is designed to amend legislation within the Justice portfolio to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of courts and agencies and to clarify relevant legislation. However, non-government members made a statement of reservations which is included in the committee's report. It states—

We do not support the proposed amendments regarding the changes to the qualifications for a candidate to be considered worthy of nomination as Chief Executive Officer of Legal Aid Queensland. The current requirement is that a candidate must be a lawyer of at least 5 years' experience.

It is worth reading the witness statement provided by the QLS to get a fuller understanding of where those issues lie. Clearly we support the QLS submission to the committee.

The QLS outlined a number of other issues that need clarification. They suggest that the Legal Profession Act 2007 be amended to allow for the electronic conveyancing of bills as of right. That seems more than appropriate to us, particularly given the nature of conveyancing in a modern technological and digital world. We support their suggestion in that regard.

In relation to the amendments to the Retail Shop Leases Act 1994, we note that the QLS states that new clause 220 does not address its concerns and goes against the fundamental principles of the act. In its submission the QLS states—

The proposed changes are, in the Society's opinion, unnecessary and significantly detract from the intended purpose of the disclosure statement as a small business protection measure.

It is interesting when one looks at the committee report to find that early on in the report there is a list of organisations, including the QLS, consulted by the government. It really beggars belief that the QLS would not have brought this up with the Attorney-General and the others involved in the development of the bill. I think the Bar Association could have taken a similar view, although we will not know for sure.

Only time will tell in terms of the comments made by the member for Mansfield with regard to the possibility of someone already being lined up for a role. We will see what comes of that. I will conclude there. Given that the majority of the bill is supported by us, I will commend the bill to the House with the hope that some amendments will be made during consideration in detail.