




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR KALLANGUR

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ADJOURNMENT

Workers' Memorial Day

 **Mr KING** (Kallangur—ALP) (8.43 pm): I usually rise to speak about something positive and cheery from my area during this debate, but tonight I rise to talk about something that is far from cheery and is absolutely unacceptable. Tonight I will talk about workplace deaths and the tragedy they bring to families and friends.

Last month I proudly attended Workers' Memorial Day, where we commemorated 52 workers who have died in Australia already this year. That is 52 workers who said goodbye to their families, went off to work and will never return home. That is far too many and that was just until May. Since then in Queensland we have had a police officer who tragically died while performing his duty and the same night a Queensland Rail worker died while performing maintenance tasks at Petrie station in my electorate. The worker was nearly 65 and was planning his retirement.

These recent incidents since Workers' Memorial Day bring a sobering reminder that we need to do more to curb this devastating statistic. Each year the number of fatalities grows, and I really hope to see in my lifetime, instead of a memorial day, a day of celebration with zero workplace fatalities, because even one workplace death is too many. No-one should ever go to work with any other expectation than to return home to their families safe and in the same physical and mental condition as they left.

Our government is acting on making safer workplaces. Last sitting our government introduced legislation to enforce a chain of responsibility with regard to nonconforming building products, as well as a requirement that the QBCC shares information with health and safety regulators, including the electrical safety regulator, the workplace health and safety regulator and the public health regulator. These amendments also require licensees to report notifiable health and safety incidents, breaches and risks to the Queensland Building and Construction Commission.

As well as that, in October last year the Palaszczuk government announced that it would undertake a best practice audit of our workplace health and safety procedures and laws. As part of the best practice audit, work is underway with stakeholders to find the best way to implement the proposed new law of negligence causing death. This is and should be a priority.

Workplace deaths are a serious issue and when the workers' representatives or unions call on our parliament to act on this, as they did at a recent rally outside this place, it particularly disappoints me to see tweets from those opposite like the member for Kawana's recent effort when he said on that day, 'Get back to work bludgers! The pubs will do alright this arvo!' I table that tweet.

Tabled paper: Extract, undated, from the Twitter profile of the member for Kawana, Mr Jarrod Bleijie MP, in relation to building workers rally in the CBD [\[982\]](#).

In my opinion, the member appears to allow his hatred of unions to overshadow the health and safety of those workers the unions were representing. I went out and listened to the speakers and heard a passionate plea from the father of Jason Garrels, who tragically died in a workplace incident. I really

hope that the member for Kawana was not referring to him, because that man is not a bludger. We all owe it to the victims and families of these terrible events to ensure that everything will be done to prevent this from ever happening again.