




Speech By
Tim Nicholls

MEMBER FOR CLAYFIELD

Record of Proceedings, 14 February 2017

MATTER OF PUBLIC INTEREST

**Domestic and Family Violence, Law Reform; Palaszczuk Labor Government,
Performance**

 **Mr NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (12.12 pm): Having just introduced the bill, the comments by the Leader of the House—and I understand what he is doing—go to the very heart of the problem that we are dealing with here, which is process over outcome. This is clearly a matter of significant public interest. What we have in this circumstance is quite clearly nitpicking. It is nothing more than nitpicking. How can this government stand here today and say, 'Will you please look at it, because it sounds the same'? Instead, the Leader of the House could have said, 'Do you know what? It has been too long. Do you know what? Too many women have died. Do you know what? Too many kids do not live in proper families, because people have been perpetuating domestic and family violence.' It is time to stand up and do something. It is not time to nitpick on process.

If the member for Sandgate had wanted to have a conversation about it, all he needed to do was grab me on the way out and say, 'Listen, let's chat about it. Let's sort it out.' Do you know what? We want to make this work. We want to support you in doing this. This morning in answer to questions, I heard the Premier talking about bipartisanship. Where was the bipartisanship in not inviting the shadow minister onto the implementation committee? I have not had that phone call. Where was the bipartisanship that she was crowing about so loudly in terms of reviewing the recommendation of the *Not now, not ever* report? I have not had that phone call in any way, shape or form.

As we have been since the beginning of this parliament, we remain steadfastly committed to supporting reform to domestic and family violence laws. We have agreed with every piece of legislation brought into this House to strengthen domestic and family violence laws. Where we have found a mistake, we have negotiated with the government on changes that we believed could make it better. We have moved amendments to improve the legislation to make it better. We are not proud in relation to having to listen and make amendments to legislation if it can be made better. However, we are determined to make it better and not to sit here hiding behind reviews such as the parole review, which we are still waiting to hear from in relation to events that led to the tragic death of a grandmother in North Queensland. We are not prepared to sit here and wait for further reviews when action can be taken now.

We have not put anything into this legislation that has not been tried or is not being done in another state in Australia. It is all there. Yes, we have spoken to the Law Society. Yes, we have spoken to the police. Yes, they have some concerns and we acknowledge those concerns, as we always do. However, ultimately it is up to us in this place to make a decision. It is for the Law Society to make a decision. They are not elected by the people of Queensland. It is not up to the police. It is up to the lawmakers in this House to make the tough decisions. It is up to us to make the call and to make the decision. If those opposite will not do that, we will. If this Premier refuses to act, I will. If she will not do what she is paid to do, we will. That is why we have introduced this bill and it is why I am so disappointed

in what the member for Sandgate has done. I actually think that the member for Sandgate, on his good days—this is serious—actually believes in the power of this place to do good things. I think we all do. However, we have to understand that we have to do things and, so far, nothing has been done on these matters, which is why we are taking part in it.

Of course, we will address the issues raised, but the matters in this bill do deal with separate issues. They clearly deal with separate issues. We will be very happy to see this bill debated as soon as possible because, as I read out in those letters and as my colleagues the member for Everton, the member for Mansfield and the member for Mudgeeraba know from the heart-wrenching conversations that we have had with mothers of young women who have lost their lives at the hands of their partners or estranged partners, it is taking too long and we cannot wait any further. Therefore, I will discuss this matter with the member for Sandgate and we will resolve this. We will get it sorted, so that this legislation can be brought back and we can then test the mettle of members of this place, to see whether they are prepared to do the right thing.

Talking about reviewing and not doing, this government is beset by crisis, instability and inaction. All we see from those opposite are reshuffles and reviews. As new ministers are sworn in, the attention is on the factional plays over who is getting what job and where they are going. They had five days to find a new minister, but even he did not know what job he was going to have. How long did it take to find a new minister when the member for Bundaberg departed? Poor old Bill is back in the saddle again. They have more concern for what their jobs are than jobs for Queenslanders. We have seen 43,000 jobs lost in regional Queensland as reported in the media.

As this team travels, as we have constantly—whether we are in Townsville where they are worried about jobs, crime, the lack of investment and being ignore or whether we are in Bundaberg where they are worried about exactly the same issues—the one thing that comes through loud and clear is that there are too many reviews and not enough dos. This is an administration plagued by paralysis and incapable of actually making a decision. It is the people of Queensland and the Queensland economy that is suffering.

Business confidence in Queensland continues to be in negative territory and it has been ever since the election of the Palaszczuk government. That is because confidence is weighed down by the Palaszczuk Labor government's inability to make the tough decisions. As outlined by the CCIQ's Pulse survey, inaction from the Palaszczuk Labor government is one of the top two factors negatively impacting confidence here in Queensland. It states—

While global concerns continue to pre-occupy many businesses, domestic issues, and in particular the performance of the Queensland government, persists as a significant negative influence on overall business confidence. A high proportion of businesses indicated that inactivity of the Queensland Government on key policies is significantly restricting the growth potential of small business in this state.

All we see from this government is review after review. In just two years the government has started around 150 reviews, task forces and inquiries. That is a rate of more than six every month. After commissioning these reviews, at a significant cost to the taxpayer, the government has shown a propensity to sit on them for as long as possible to avoid actually having to make a tough decision about the contents of the report.

Ms Grace interjected.

Mr NICHOLLS: I hear the member for the Brisbane Central piping away over there. All we need to do is ask: how is the racing industry going right now under the member for Brisbane Central? I think the member for Brisbane Central's view is a bit like her view on youth unemployment, the young unemployed are always with us. The problem for the member for Brisbane Central is that the racing industry is always with her as well. The racing industry is always with us, but the member for Brisbane Central wishes it was not.

Ms Grace interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister for Industrial Relations, you will be warned under standing order 253A if you persist.

Mr NICHOLLS: It took her so long to get in there, you would think she would want to hang around. She might get scratched at the next race.

(Time expired)