



Speech By  
**Hon. Yvette D'Ath**


**MEMBER FOR REDCLIFFE**

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Record of Proceedings, 6 September 2017

## **MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

### **Justice System, Funding**

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Training and Skills) (2.37 pm): The Palaszczuk government has a record of investing in people and supporting the most vulnerable and disadvantaged in our community. Our government has provided vital support to community legal centres and increased funding to the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions and Legal Aid Queensland. Our government supported CLCs to ensure they are able to continue to support the most vulnerable in our society. It was this government that stood up to the cuts that the Turnbull government was going to make to these CLCs. We took up that fight.

It is everyday Queenslanders who access these legal services—mums and dads, grandparents, young people, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, people with a disability and people with mental health issues. They are the ones who are in most need of these services. Some of them are amongst the most vulnerable in Queensland and we need to support them.

The Palaszczuk government has continued its contribution in funding to the community legal centres and has provided \$33 million over four years and approximately \$555,000 in additional funds to ensure these services continued when the Commonwealth government threatened to remove their funding. By providing this funding, we ensured the services provided by the CLCs and the jobs of those employed were secure. We were the first Queensland government to also fund the LGBTI Legal Services and we removed the gag clauses on our CLCs.

The Palaszczuk government knows how vital legal assistance services are, and that is why we provided \$70.5 million to Legal Aid Queensland this financial year and will increase this to \$76.6 million next financial year, meeting our commitment to bring Legal Aid Queensland funding up to the national average. It is vital for the ongoing safety of Queenslanders that those who commit serious crimes are not just apprehended and charged but also prosecuted and convicted.

The Palaszczuk government is also responding to the growing complexity and demands placed on the criminal justice system by providing extra funding to the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions. The ODPP plays a vital role in this process. We have increased funding to the DPP by providing an additional 26 permanent positions. This represents an allocation of \$12.1 million in base funding for over four years commencing 1 July 2016.

The majority of these positions were allocated to the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions' regional locations around the state with the remainder in Brisbane. It is the Palaszczuk government that is investing in front-line services and supporting important legal services in our communities and strengthening our justice system.