



Speech By  
**Shane King**


**MEMBER FOR KURWONGBAH**

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## ADJOURNMENT

### Workers' Memorial Day

 **Mr KING** (Kurwongbah—ALP) (10.55 pm): It is good to follow someone else who has talked about worker safety. Sadly, since Anzac Day, I have had to attend another memorial service. Even more sadly, it occurs each year. I refer to Workers' Memorial Day, when we remember those workers who lost their lives at work, those who were injured and who cannot return to work, and those workers who also suffer from work related illnesses such as mesothelioma and asbestosis, and those who, sadly, take their own lives because of events in the workplace.

Workers' Memorial Day is about remembering all of those people and pausing to reflect on the wreckage that these deaths and injuries cause families and friends. Sadly, the risk of death and injury at work is a reality for all workers, no matter what industry. Helping to keep workers safe is a responsibility of all of us and it is a major focus of the union movement, which is much demonised by those opposite.

So far this year, nearly 40 Australians have been killed at work. In 2017, there were 184 deaths at work Australia wide, including the deaths of 22 Queensland workers. That is clearly not acceptable. We are not even halfway through the year and we have lost nearly 40.

I am proud to be part of the Palaszczuk Labor government that has led the way in trying to curb these terrible figures by being the first state government to introduce industrial manslaughter laws. These laws will see bosses and corporations whose workers died owing to unacceptable and unsafe practices held accountable with significant jail sentences and large fines. My government has always acted on making safer workplaces.

When those opposite malign my government for listening to the unions about workplace safety, when they mock my government's introduction of good legislation that has the intent of curbing the shocking rate of workplace deaths, we have to wonder why. We should all be pulling together to make sure that every worker in this state has the fundamental right to come home from work in the same physical and mental state in which they left home.

Last year, when the unions held a protest outside this place to bring to our collective attention the number of those avoidable workplace deaths, we saw tweets from those opposite, such as the effort by the member for Kawana who tweeted, 'Get back to work you bludgers. The pubs will do all right this arvo.' I know who the speaker at that protest was, because I went out to listen to him. He was the father of Jason Garrels, who was an electrical apprentice who tragically died in a workplace accident. I do not think that Mr Garrels was off bludging from work.

I get it that, in my opinion, the member for Kawana appears to despise unions and the workers they represent, but I am yet to see any similar outrage against bankers, or any similar protest when this week we had farmers who protested outside this House. We on this side support the rights of people to protest. I would certainly not go to social media to malign these groups like the members opposite do.

Maybe every member of this place should attend Workers' Memorial Day next year so that they can see the workers. Then one day we can work together to make sure that we do not have a memorial day; we have a celebration of no deaths.