




Speech By
Hon. Yvette D'Ath

MEMBER FOR REDCLIFFE

Record of Proceedings, 13 June 2018

BIRTHS, DEATHS AND MARRIAGES REGISTRATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (6.36 pm), in reply: I wish to thank all honourable members for their contribution to the debate on the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Amendment Bill 2018. I acknowledge our friends in the gallery and our friends in the broader LGBTIQ community for whom we pass this bill tonight.

As I have mentioned in previous speeches, this bill will remove the restriction in section 22 of the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 2003 that required a person not to be married before the person's sex reassignment could be noted on the register of births or adopted children registry. This will remove a form of discrimination that has caused much hurt and pain for some members of the transgender community.

I note that the member for Toowoomba South indicated in his contribution in the House on 17 May 2018 that the opposition would not oppose this legislation. I thank members opposite for their approach. I also want to thank all members on this side of the House for their contributions to this debate. I know many strongly support this bill and have many friends who have been advocating for this legislation.

I have to say I found it disappointing that the member for Toowoomba South, whilst not opposing the bill, did sadly seek to diminish the LNP's support by then talking about, and turning this debate into, political correctness. I have to single out the member for Lockyer for his contribution. If the member for Lockyer really opposes this bill he should be honest enough to do so in this chamber. His speech—

Mr Bleijie: Great speech.

Mrs D'ATH: I take the interjection from the member for Kawana that it was a great speech. He said that we should get on to more important issues in this chamber and not spend too much time debating these issues. The member sat on the parliamentary committee and heard from individuals about the impact of this law.

Mr Crandon interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Stewart): Member for Coomera, if you are going to interject, you need to do so from your own seat; otherwise, you need to sit there quietly.

Mrs D'ATH: I simply say that I am disappointed in that. This was something that could have been truly bipartisan. The committee report was. Those comments did not need to be made.

Mr Deputy Speaker, some would have you believe that this bill was only brought before this House because it is a requirement as a consequence of the change of the Marriage Act to address this issue before the end of the year because of changes to the Sex Discrimination Act. However, I clarify for every member in this House and for everybody outside of this House that this bill would have been brought forward a long time ago if we could have done so.

The only reason we were not able to act on this discriminatory term in this state legislation was the Marriage Act. We could not act until the Marriage Act was changed. By changing the Marriage Act, we took the first opportunity to bring this bill before the House in this new term of parliament to see it

debated. It is not being done simply as a technical change because we need to do this in line with the Sex Discrimination Act. We are doing this because it is the right thing to do and that is what members of parliament should do.

The bill before the House seeks to right a wrong that transgender people have had to endure for far too long. In commending this bill to the House, I want to once again reiterate the Human Rights Law Centre's comments to the committee's public hearing that summed up so well what the bill delivers at its core for transgender Queenslanders. They stated—

It is a small but significant change that will mean transgender people can be free to be who they are while maintaining their commitment to the person they fell in love with.

The Palaszczuk government thanks those organisations and individuals who contributed to the committee process. I thank the committee and the committee chair for their report. I thank the LGBTI community for their ongoing advocacy to ensure that they are treated equally so that we do not have to have these debates in the future. I will say this about the debates that have been had: members are right in that we should be discussing a whole lot of things in this parliament and not have to talk about gender because gender should not matter. That is what this is all about. Once again, I thank honourable members for their contributions during this debate. I am very proud to commend this bill to the House.