




Speech By
Hon. Yvette D'Ath

MEMBER FOR REDCLIFFE

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CRIME AND CORRUPTION AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (5.14 pm), in reply: I thank honourable members for their contributions to the debate on the Crime and Corruption and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018. I note the member for Burleigh said that I have not answered their questions. I had not been given the opportunity to sum up, but I will answer those questions now. I can say that the majority, if not all, of the questions that have been put to me by those opposite, including by the member for Toowoomba South, were actually included in my second reading speech, if they had listened. I am happy to go through them again.

I deliberately referenced the Fitzgerald inquiry in my speech not only to underscore the original purpose of the now CCC but also to reflect on how it has evolved to reflect the changing nature of government since that time 30 years ago. The CCC must have the powers to address a changing public sector and a changing model in government service delivery. That is why we have put the definitions that we have.

The member for Scenic Rim asked for clarification on a number of points around the broadening of the definition. The member for Toowoomba South raised this as well, as did the member for Burleigh. I specifically addressed the Queensland Law Society's concerns in my second reading speech. However, I will repeat that the requirements in new section 15(2) are cumulative and a public official will only be required to refer a complaint about this type of conduct if the official reasonably suspects that it involves or may involve corrupt conduct—specifically, conduct that impairs or could impair public confidence in public administration; involves or could involve the conduct included in an exhaustive list of examples, such as collusive tendering or frauds relating to obtaining licences or permits; and would, if proved, be a criminal offence or be a disciplinary breach providing reasonable grounds for termination of employment.

This is a significant threshold, as I said in my second reading speech, and is an appropriate limitation to ensure the CCC's jurisdiction and coercive powers are enlivened only in appropriate circumstance. What is more, this is central to the commission's purpose. It is important to note that the existing definition of 'corrupt conduct' under the operation of section 15(1) largely remains in place. This means that those changes made in 2014 which were designed to bring about a reduction in the number of trivial and frivolous complaints remain in place. I can also reassure the member for Kawana that commencement by proclamation allows a methodical rollout to enable units of public administration and the CCC to discuss the impacts of the definitional changes, including appropriate assessment of how and when a matter impairs or could impair public confidence in public administration.

I sought in my second reading speech to be very factual and to not try to politically point-score when talking to a very important piece of legislation. I welcome that those opposite support the bill and support the important fact of seeking to ensure that we do everything possible to fight corruption in the public sector, but I do need to respond to those opposite in relation to the pointscore they seemed to make in talking about past Labor governments. They asserted that a number of past members of this

place were charged with corruption, and that statement is not accurate with the names that they necessarily mentioned. They certainly sought to make inferences about past members of this parliament.

Those opposite very conveniently were selective in their history of corruption in this state, particularly the member for Toowoomba South. I would have hoped that, if you were going to give an historical list of members in this place who have wronged this parliament and the community, you would be honest enough to talk about the failings on both sides. We have certainly acknowledged the failings on our side. There are some individuals who have faced prison time in relation to those offences, and we have certainly acknowledged that in the past. It is reasonable to acknowledge the former member for Redcliffe and his actions as a member of parliament. It is the reason why I stand here today as the member for Redcliffe.

I will call him out because of the damage and hurt that that person caused to my community because of what they did. I can tell honourable members that some have never recovered; some have not worked since. I take what happened to them very personally. We should not be selective about the history.

When we talk about integrity and accountability, we are not just talking specifically about those individuals. Honourable members should remember that it was the LNP who came in here and increased political donation thresholds so there was less transparency; voted against the bill to introduce real-time disclosure; changed estimates committee hearings to have less accountability and transparency; stifled complaints to the CCC by forcing complainants wanting to make anonymous complaints to complete a statutory declaration signing their name as to why they want to be anonymous; sacked the PCCC in the dead of the night because they did not like what they were saying; and cut 30 jobs from the Crime and Misconduct Commission, as it was then called.

Members opposite want to talk about appointments. We know of past appointments including Michael Caltabiano as a DG. They stopped publishing annual crime statistics and they gagged community organisations from speaking out against government decisions. These are just some of the things that the LNP did. If they are going to come in here and try to take the high moral ground, they are going to fail because they have a pretty dismal history.

I am pleased that there is bipartisan support for these changes. They are important. We do need to ensure that our crime-fighting body and our body that oversees investigations in relation to corrupt conduct have the power they need. This legislation delivers on an election commitment and delivers on our commitment to ensure the CCC has those powers. I commend the bill to the House. I once again thank all members for their contribution to this debate.