



Speech By  
**Corrine McMillan**


**MEMBER FOR MANSFIELD**

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Record of Proceedings, 28 March 2019

**LEGAL AFFAIRS AND COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE**

**Report, Motion to Take Note**

 **Ms McMILLAN** (Mansfield—ALP) (3.24 pm): I rise today to speak about the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee's report on its inquiry into the strategic review of the Office of the Queensland Ombudsman. The Ombudsman Act outlines the necessity for a review of the Office of the Ombudsman at least every seven years. Ms Simone Webbe was appointed in September 2017 to conduct this review and presented this report in January 2018. Despite the positive overall assessment, the review referenced 72 recommendations to improve the quality of administrative practices and procedures. At the public hearing the reviewer explained the large number of recommendations and reinforced to the committee that the Ombudsman's office is working very well and that her recommendations were merely to improve and enhance the efficiency, effectiveness and economy of the performance of the functions of the office.

Some of the recommendations outlined include: the Ombudsman's suggestion of legislative clarification to enable preliminary inquiries with agencies before commencing an own-initiative investigation, which is strongly supported; the Ombudsman's suggestion to amend the Ombudsman Act 2001 to insert a provision or provisions which give the Ombudsman a formal discretion following consultation with the agency to refer a matter to an agency for investigation with a report-back mechanism about the results of action taken, which is also supported.

Recommendation 20 suggested that legislative amendments should enable the Queensland Ombudsman and the Queensland Audit Office to share complaints and investigation data and other systemic information in confidence. One of the most important recommendations is the development of a shared learning strategy across departments and agencies. This is something that I have worked passionately towards, applying this same strategy to build collaboration and understanding of teaching and learning approaches across schools in the metropolitan region. When we align our most successful leadership and management practices and apply these consistently across departments and agencies, Queenslanders benefit.

The Palaszczuk Labor government knows of the thorough, conscientious and professional work of our Queensland Public Service. Many of our departments and agencies are some of the largest in the country and are managing millions of dollars, projects and services. It is prudent that as a progressive and high-performing Labor government we continue to reflect to ensure continued improvement and that we continue to raise the bar around service delivery.

We thank the Office of the Ombudsman, as they have already commenced consideration and implementation of a number of the recommendations listed in this report. I thank all those who assisted the committee with its inquiry—in particular, Ms Webbe, Mr Clarke, his staff and the submitters. I commend this report to the House.