




Speech By
Hon. Grace Grace

MEMBER FOR MCCONNELL

Record of Proceedings, 3 April 2019

**QUEENSLAND CIVIL AND ADMINISTRATIVE TRIBUNAL AND OTHER
LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education and Minister for Industrial Relations) (12.52 pm): I rise to support the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. The purpose of this bill is twofold. It delivers the implementation of recommendations from the review of the QCAT Act. It is hard to believe that it was 10 years ago that Labor brought in this great initiative. It also delivers on the Palaszczuk government's promise to introduce laws to help purchasers of lemon motor vehicles.

QCAT commenced operation in December 2009. After 10 years it is always good practice to have a review. I commend the Attorney-General for having a look at how QCAT can do a little better. It has been a tremendous success story in spite of the moaning, groaning and whinging of those opposite about resources. It just keeps happening in here. It is the same story. One person writes the dot points for them and they just keep banging the same drum over and over again. They are the most monotonous, boring speeches you could ever hear. Somebody writes the dot points and they get up and parrot them. They do not even have the ability to write their own speeches with regard to this bill.

QCAT has been an incredible success. As I said, it was a Labor initiative. The Attorney-General more than adequately funds QCAT. After 10 years of being so successful you get a lot of people wanting to use it. They should be patting QCAT on the back rather than coming in here continually whinging and whining about people having to wait, which is something that may never eventuate. The review of the QCAT Act found that it was working well.

Opposition members interjected.

Ms GRACE: Those opposite may want to stop interjecting. They cannot handle it when they hear the truth. They wrote the speech for you, member for Ninderry. You got up and you parroted it out. That is fine. Go right ahead and do it. That is okay. You are a new member. I will give you at least that somebody had to write it for you.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Pugh): Through the chair, Minister.

Ms GRACE: It is through the chair. Maybe if he listened rather than interjected—

Government members interjected.

Ms GRACE: You have to liven this place up a bit. It has been so boring. Honestly and truly, we have been sitting here hearing the same old whinging and whining from those opposite. It is lunch time in five minutes, let us just bring the debate up a bit and start making it a little objective.

The review found that QCAT was working well and that stakeholders support the act and its objectives. Enough of this. This is what the independent review found. The Attorney-General does a great job in making sure that it has support. The QCAT Act review report recommended a small number of legislative amendments to improve the operational efficiency of QCAT and to better achieve the objectives of the QCAT Act. The most significant of these amendments was the one relating to QCAT's expanded motor vehicle jurisdiction. That was one of the actual recommendations.

A lot of the car dealers in my electorate are obviously looking forward to this. There are many car dealers in the Newstead area, especially in that stretch of Newstead where the apartments are. These changes will be of great interest to them and their purchasers.

We are delivering on our promises here in Queensland, as we usually do. We are delivering on our promise to improve consumer rights when it comes to lemon vehicles. Once again, this is a pat on the back for one of the best attorneys-general we have seen in this state for a while—when compared to the member for Kawana. The amendments are to implement elements of the Palaszczuk government's 2017 election commitment to improve fairness and provide greater rights for Queenslanders when buying a car.

I know we have heard horror stories. I have had family members who have had lemon vehicles and caravans. They generally are a very big expense for a lot of families. This gives them the opportunity to get an adjudication. We are expanding the role of QCAT. It will be able to conciliate and arbitrate in this regard. What a great step forward. This will make sure that people are not stuck with a lemon.

One constituent came and saw me. I felt sorry for them. Everything you could possibly imagine could go wrong with a vehicle went wrong with theirs. This gives them the opportunity to take that into the QCAT jurisdiction. Upping the amount from \$25,000 to \$100,000 is a great step forward. It means that most things will be included. I think these changes are a real step forward.

I also believe that the bill will enable an adjudicator to hear and decide the proceedings. It will reduce costs for consumers who want to get their lemon vehicle problem sorted. There is nothing better than solving a lemon problem when it comes to motor vehicles. To ensure accessibility, the bill will provide QCAT with flexibility in the way that these proceedings are heard.

This legislation really ticks all the boxes. It expands the jurisdiction. It allows people with a problem to come forward. It makes sure QCAT is relevant after 10 years. It implements a recommendation. It ticks off on our commitments as a government. Commitments are pretty good when it comes to Labor governments. That is why we are on this side of the House and they are on the opposite side. It makes sure that QCAT remains relevant. It makes sure that it delivers for consumers. As a member who has a lot of motor vehicle retailers in my electorate, the electorate of McConnel, it is particularly relevant.

Mr Powell interjected.

Ms GRACE: I will take the interjection from the member for Glass House. That is in the area of Newstead—one of the most beautiful areas in the seat of McConnel. There are more apartments in that area. It is absolutely fantastic. It is beautiful.

Opposition members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The minister is not being provocative, as best I can tell.

Dr Lynham: The 'limoncello laws'.

Ms GRACE: I am talking about the beautiful electorate of McConnel. I will take the interjection from Minister Lynham. We could almost call this limoncello legislation; it will be so sweet and so good.

This bill most certainly meets our election commitment. It certainly delivers for the people of Queensland. It certainly delivers for those families who find themselves in the terrible situation where they may purchase a large motor vehicle or a caravan and find that it is a lemon. Now they can make that lemon into limoncello. What could possibly be better than that? I commend the bill to the House.