




Speech By  
**James Lister**

**MEMBER FOR SOUTHERN DOWNS**

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**WORKERS' COMPENSATION AND REHABILITATION AND OTHER  
LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mr LISTER** (Southern Downs—LNP) (4.51 pm): I, too, rise to speak to the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2019. As always, I thank the committee for its work in presenting the report. The LNP supports the bill. We share the view that a great workers compensation scheme is important. The member for Logan mentioned the contribution of the member for Kawana. I refer to his contribution as well in that I thought it was fantastic that he highlighted a number of strong points of the LNP's stewardship of WorkCover in Queensland.

Having the lowest premiums in the country is a really great thing for the bottom line of businesses. This can be ploughed back into the productive part of the economy to create more job opportunities. The injury rates had fallen. The best thing for a workers compensation scheme is that business is confident and strong and that we have a healthy business environment, because more people participating in the scheme makes it more economic. Self-evidently, all of this is true. I also share the member's perplexity in terms of how the scheme could have achieved such great results during the LNP's period in power but when, on assuming power, the current government replaced the board. I would love to know the minister's thinking in doing that. Nevertheless, I have some nice things to say about this bill.

In particular, I have corresponded with the minister in the matter of a constituent whose daughter injured herself at work. She worked at a hospital. Sadly, at the time she was unaware of how severe was the injury. She persevered and did not become incapacitated sufficiently to apply for WorkCover until the six months were over. As I say, I corresponded with Minister Grace on that matter and am aware that she would have liked to help in the situation but the act prohibited action in that case. I am really glad that, although it is too late for that particular constituent, this is a real step forward for those in particular who have soldiered on—as do many of us when crook—only to find out that the situation was more serious or due to become more serious over time.

I also commend the change to enable businesses to offer an apology to staff. I heard a number of members talk about their business experience in the past and how they have had a great relationship with staff. There is nothing more tragic than legal or liability reasons preventing an employer from expressing heartfelt sorrow for a much valued employee injured at work. The ability to express that regret and say 'I am sorry' is a great step forward. I absolutely applaud that. It is a good bill that the LNP supports, and I commend it to the House.