



Speech By  
**Julianne Gilbert**


**MEMBER FOR MACKAY**

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Record of Proceedings, 21 August 2019

**MOTION**

**Mine Safety, Parliamentary Inquiry**

 **Mrs GILBERT** (Mackay—ALP) (5.34 pm): My community, like other communities that support the mining industry, are in shock and are grieving the loss of family members, workmates, friends and neighbours—those who were taken before their time in workplace mining tragedies. I pass on my condolences to all of those who have lost loved ones.

The safety reset and surveys have given voice to workers in our communities—more than 23,000 of them. They are speaking and we are listening. The opposition have chosen to spread misinformation regarding the tripartite committees who advise Minister Lynham. I would like to start to bring some facts to this debate.

The Coalmining Safety and Health Advisory Committee and the mineral mines and quarries counterpart, the Mining Safety and Health Advisory Committee, are built around the government, industry and workers' representatives working together. These boards were not dissolved. They continue to provide advice. Their primary function is to provide tripartite, technical advice to Minister Lynham about safety and health matters. They served and they continue to provide this function.

The tripartite nature of the advisory committees ensures that the views of all stakeholders are represented to provide advice that is in the best interests of mineworkers and the industry as a whole. The mine safety and health regulatory framework in Queensland is based on tripartite cooperation between industry, unions and government. This model was enshrined in parliament when it enacted the Coal Mining Safety and Health Act in 1999 and the Mining and Quarrying Safety and Health Act in 1999, 20 years ago.

The advisory committees have driven many important reforms over the last several years including new competencies for persons with safety and health obligations in the mining industry and, of course, support for the sector's response to mine dust and lung disease. The Mining Safety and Health Advisory Committee has met eight times in the last financial year, including on 18 September 2018 and 5 June 2019—both held in Townsville—and was followed by an onsite visit to South32's Cannington Mine on 6 June 2019, providing an opportunity to talk to mineworkers and management about health and safety issues.

Both advisory committees attended the mining industry safety forum on 10 July in the wake of the recent fatalities. Much like these committees, the mining industry safety forum was attended by government, industry and workers' representatives. Representatives from groups such as the Australian Workers' Union, the CFMMEU, Cement Concrete & Aggregates Australia and the Queensland Resources Council all attended. I am advised that the shadow minister, the member for Burdekin, chose not to attend. I am also advised that the Queensland Resources Council are very much against the LNP's proposed talkfest, preferring to work with our government to ensure the safety of Queensland workers.

Last weekend Minister Lynham, the member for Rockhampton and I attended the annual Queensland Mining Industry Health and Safety Conference on the Gold Coast. I did not see any of the opposition present. I saw government, industry and unions again coming together to work together on this issue. While I was there I met with workers from Mackay and I listened to their stories and their experiences with safety in the industry. There was nobody from the other side there to listen to these stories.

We on this side of the House do not require an inquiry to talk to workers. We listen to workers as part of who we are—unlike the member for Burdekin, who in the media is worried only about executives. I say to the member for Burdekin that when everybody does their job workforces are kept safe. Indeed, I am listening to those in my community and our government is listening to Queenslanders in the industry, unions and workplaces.