




Speech By
Stephen Andrew

MEMBER FOR MIRANI

Record of Proceedings, 26 February 2019

HUMAN RIGHTS BILL

 **Mr ANDREW** (Mirani—PHON) (5.20 pm): I thank all committee members and the people who gave submissions to the inquiry into the Human Rights Bill. As my grandfather would probably say, not even the good Lord has told us what our rights are, although he has told us what not to do morally through the Ten Commandments.

I rise to speak on the Human Rights Bill 2018. I consider this bill to be a waste of the Queensland parliament's time and resources. It would be a tough ask to find any Australian who would disagree with the fundamentals of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948. Australia was in effect a foundation member. Way back then our Commonwealth legislation and social standards were advanced as a model for post-World War II recovery and essentially have been adopted, or at least considered, as a baseline for any number of international conventions since. Australia has a comprehensive suite of Commonwealth laws, backed up by a robust judicial system, with centuries of established common law. Why do we now need Queensland legislation promising to cover that very same ground? Section 109 of the Australian Constitution clearly states—

When a law of a State is inconsistent with a law of the Commonwealth, the latter shall prevail, and the former shall, to the extent of the inconsistency, be invalid.

Therefore, this is a Clayton's bill leading to a pointless act sitting on the statutes that future governments could attempt to apply in a great show of political theatrics. However, in doing so, they could further erode the respectability of this place and all who are elected to fill its seats.

What is being achieved by this Human Rights Bill is nothing but a false sense of security, presenting a mirage of great promise sitting on the horizon that, if actually relied upon, would quickly vanish into nothing. Let us keep in mind that a state based human rights act might well be pointless legislative duplication. How we arrive at passing the bill may well set a dangerous precedent for bills introduced by any future Queensland government.

I ask members to please remember that this is a unicameral parliament. In effect, the legislative power afforded to the government of this time is barely more respectable than that of a warlord dictatorship. For instance, the most basic concept of human rights is often obliterated by literally guillotining anyone with opposing views and advancing to an arbitrary majority vote of one.

I have a suggestion: if the minister were fair dinkum, the Premier and the cabinet should refer the intent of the bill to the federal government, to ensure that amendments required are consistent and fully contained at the Commonwealth level.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Pugh): Member for Mirani, I caution you not to use unparliamentary language. 'Warlord dictatorship' would be considered unparliamentary language. I ask you to please withdraw it.

Mr ANDREW: I withdraw and I thank you for your wisdom in this matter. If the present state government has no traction in the other place, I offer an introduction to the One Nation leader in the federal Senate, Senator Hanson. We will help get any changes through the federal parliament. However, I do not believe the present government would consider such a measure. Why does Labor seek to denigrate anything that they did not think of themselves, and they do not think of much themselves? I am not going to support the bill's passage, knowing that it has no chance of achieving anything.