



Speech By  
**Tim Mander**


**MEMBER FOR EVERTON**

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Record of Proceedings, 1 May 2019

**MOTION**

**Labour Movement**

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (2.17 pm): I rise to speak against this motion. I was brought up in believing in unionism and I still believe in the principle of trade unionism, but I do not believe in the militant trade unionism we have seen grow over the past 30, 40 or 50 years. My father, who was a union member, would be rolling in his grave if he could see the way the trade union movement works today. There is no greater example of that sentiment than union membership levels now compared to 30, 40 or 50 years ago. People have voted with their feet. That is why union membership now hovers between 13 per cent and 15 per cent, depending on whether you include the public sector, where most are in the union because they have to be—for example, teachers and nurses worried about insurance. If you took those people out, union membership would be at five, six or seven per cent because it has lost relevance. Not only has it lost relevance; it is also costing Queensland taxpayers money through the undue influence of unions. To understand that, you only need to look at the activities of the unions and the influence they have on this government and the detrimental effect that has on Queensland taxpayers and Queensland's economy. Heaven help us if Bill Shorten is elected, because Queensland and Victoria will be a model for the Shorten government and then we will see how destructive these unions are.

Let us look at some examples of the influence that the unions have had in recent times under this government that have cost Queensland taxpayers. Just recently private prisons have come back under public control supposedly to address the overcrowding issue, but there will be an increased cost of \$110 million for taxpayers over the next four years simply to bring the prisons back under union control. That is how much extra it costs to have unionised staff rather than the private sector do it more efficiently. Let us look at the 'rail fail' and the influence that the unions have had on that with a closed shop. There has been a deliberate attempt to ensure that they maintain heavy loads of overtime week in, week out where we have train drivers earning \$190,000 per year and 470 fewer services. Who loses out? It is the Queensland public who loses out.

Across the road at the Queen's Wharf development there are carpenters earning \$230,000 a year because of the ridiculous claims that the unions put on the private sector, and it is estimated that up to 30 per cent extra is put on building and construction costs because of the undue influence and the unreasonable demands of the trade union movement. If we want to look at the worst, let us look at the CFMMEU and the impact that it has. Time and time again it has been found to be lawless and fined millions of dollars. What is the first thing Bill Shorten is going to do? He is going to abolish the ABCC. He is going to abolish the watchdog—the one that keeps these people under check.

If we look at the influence of the trade union movement and the damage that it does to the economy, when it comes to industrial action in 2018, 24 per cent of days lost through strike action in this country happened right here in Queensland. Going back over the term of the Palaszczuk

government, 33 per cent of all days lost to industrial action since the Palaszczuk government has been in power have happened here in Queensland. There are Labor luminaries left, right and centre coming out and urging the Labor government to sever its ties with the union movement and the influence that it has. Peter Beattie himself, whom many of those opposite served with, has said that it must get rid of the union. The great Kevin Rudd says that it must get rid of the trade union movement. Not only that, the member for Woodridge himself says that unions have an undue influence on preselection and should stop.

*(Time expired)*