




Speech By  
**Tim Mander**

**MEMBER FOR EVERTON**

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**MOTOR ACCIDENT INSURANCE AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT  
BILL**

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (4.48 pm): I rise to speak on the Motor Accident Insurance and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. As stated, the objective of this bill is to stop the practice of insurance claim farming. The LNP supports action on claim farmers to ensure that innocent Queenslanders are not ripped off. Claim farming involves an anonymous person contacting members of the public from overseas call centres, via email or social media to ask whether they or a family member have been involved in a motor vehicle accident. Regrettably, under the Palaszczuk Labor government the number of claim farmers purporting to be from the Motor Accident Insurance Commission or other government agencies has reportedly increased significantly.

Claim farming has grown and festered under the Palaszczuk Labor government. The Deputy Premier made a virtue of dealing with this issue last year, but it has taken over a year to debate these issues and Labor's proposed reforms. Just like the promised North Queensland insurance inquiry that Labor promised almost five years ago, making insurance affordable—whether it is car or home—is simply not a priority for the Labor government.

To date, the Palaszczuk Labor government has allowed claim farmers free rein to fish out details of Queenslanders. The rampant spread of claim farming in Queensland is a major contributor to increases in the cost of Queensland's compulsory third-party insurance scheme. Increasing CPT costs are just another slug for Queensland motorists who continue to be gouged by Labor—Queenslanders who are already struggling under the nation's highest unemployment rate. Even without further increases in CTP scheme costs, already Queensland motorists are treated like cash cows by this Labor government. Since the Palaszczuk Labor government was elected, car registration has increased by 17.3 per cent.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Pause the clock. I ask the member to come back to the long title of the bill.

**Mr MANDER:** Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker, I will do that. Thanks to the economic mismanagement of this state by the weakest Premier in Queensland's history, the last thing motorists need is a CTP increase once again. That is not to mention the staggering \$230 million of fines dished out by Labor in the 2018-19 financial year.

**Mr POWER:** I rise on a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. I think the unparliamentary language is unnecessary in any debate. Could that be raised with the Deputy Leader of the Opposition?

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you for the point of order. I was just seeking advice in relation to that. I will ask you to withdraw that unparliamentary language, Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr MANDER:** Can I seek clarification?

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** 'The weakest Premier'.

**Mr MANDER:** I withdraw. While Queensland suffers the worst congestion crisis ever seen, all Labor is doing is repeatedly gouging motorists. Contrary to what the Treasurer just stated, during the public hearing smaller law firms outlined that, as the bill is currently drafted, it may prove to become a competitive barrier for regional and smaller law firms that cannot afford to enter into formalised relationships with industrial organisations or to undertake widespread advertising campaigns. Yet again it appears that the Brisbane-centric Palaszczuk Labor government is making it even harder for regional Queenslanders to get ahead. This government has an obvious anti-regions bias. As revealed in the latest regional unemployment data, the Palaszczuk Labor government's anti-jobs and anti-regions agenda is hurting regional Queenslanders desperate to find work—

**Mr POWER:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance. This does not apply to the bill.

**Mr Powell** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Resume your seat, member. While I am hearing points of order, I will hear those in silence, member for Glass House. There is no point of order.

**Mr MANDER:** Insurers also raised concerns that the proposed \$200 limit for gifts and hospitality relating to persons giving or receiving referral of a claimant or potential claimant was too high. Notably, Suncorp considered the proposed limit on the value of gifts or hospitality of \$200 too high and considered \$50 more appropriate.

Amongst all concerns raised by stakeholders, the most significant were those relating to the anticompetitive sections of the proposed legislation that—surprise, surprise—benefits the union movement. There is no doubt that the unscrupulous practice of claim farming needs to be cracked down on in Queensland. While this bill is a step in the right direction, unfortunately it also seeks to carve out special dispensations for the union bosses who run the Palaszczuk Labor government.

The exemptions for industrial organisations proposed in the bill are yet another example of how the Palaszczuk Labor government is owned lock, stock and barrel by the union movement. We have seen this through example after example, whether it is the closed shop in the rail system that has caused the rail fail blow-outs, bringing the prisons back under public control—costing taxpayers an extra \$100 million over the next four years—or granting public holiday status on Christmas Eve which will put many small businesses close to the wall.

We see it time and again. Labor is beholden to the union bosses because it relies on them for preselection and millions of dollars of cash donations. These unions have fewer members than ever before but, under the Palaszczuk government, more power than they have had for decades. Under Labor, Queensland has become the strike capital of Australia as well, because the big union bosses call the shots. Since the Premier was elected, more than 161,000 working days have been lost—higher than the much larger states of New South Wales and Victoria. That is why the LNP will move amendments to even the playing field and stamp out Labor's cosy union deal.

The principal of O'Donnell Legal, Mr Tom O'Donnell, stated on 22 July to the committee that the bill—

... will consolidate the personal injuries field into those firms that, one, have links to industrial organisations.

This statement was also mirrored by the principal of Splatt Lawyers, Mr Kerry Splatt, who stated to the committee that the bill—

... will push consumers to those firms that ... have links with industrial organisations.

The LNP will strengthen this bill by moving amendments that remove the sponsorship agreement exemption for industrial organisations and by inserting an additional section that explicitly precludes industrial organisation sponsorship agreements. The amendments seek to redefine the examples of advertisement or promotion that are not a claim referral and to preclude registered industrial organisation sponsorship agreements. The LNP's proposed amendments provide a stronger framework to prohibit all potential organisations or persons who may be giving or receiving consideration for the referral of a claimant or potential claimant. While the LNP supports this bill, Labor needs to do the right thing by Queensland and back our amendments that remove the unions' vested interest from this proposed legislation.