




Speech By
Bruce Saunders

MEMBER FOR MARYBOROUGH

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PUBLIC SERVICE AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr SAUNDERS** (Maryborough—ALP) (3.22 pm): I rise to speak in the debate on the Public Service and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. Forgive me, but is there an election in the air? I cannot get over what I have been hearing in here for the last hour or so. Let's get in the TARDIS and go back to 2012—no public servant has anything to fear; nothing. What happened after 2012? In came the Newman government. Who sat at the table? The current leader of the LNP. By the way, there is still time to roll her before 31 October. That is what happened.

It really upsets me to sit here today and listen to the drivel—and that is all it is—coming from that side of the House about public servants. We hear them say that they respect public servants. Between 2012 and 2015, 14,000 public servants in Queensland were sacked. I will talk about a friend of mine, whom I have known for a long time, who worked in the Public Service.

Mr Powell interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms McMillan): Member for Glass House, show some respect to the chair. You have been in this place long enough to understand that if you have a point of order on relevance you rise to your feet and do it with courtesy. You are warned under the standing orders.

Mr SAUNDERS: He was replaced during the Newman era. He went to work—

Mr WATTS: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order in relation to the member's relevance to the long title of the bill.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Toowoomba North. I am listening with intent and I will direct the member back to the long title of the bill if I see fit. Thank you for your guidance.

Mr SAUNDERS: I am talking about job security because the member for Lockyer opened this door. He spoke about how well they treated public servants, how they looked after public servants and how they valued public servants.

An opposition member interjected.

Mr SAUNDERS: That is what he said. He said he valued public servants. I am saying that they do not value them. This legislation values public servants. My friend was met at the front counter with his gear in a shoebox and told to go. I do not know whether anyone can remember—

Mr POWELL: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The member for Lockyer was pulled up for relevance when talking about Public Service wages. Surely what the member for Maryborough is about to embark on yet again strays from the long title of the bill.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Glass House, there is no need to include 'surely'. I am able to do my job, thank you. Member for Maryborough, be reminded of the long title of the bill.

Mr SAUNDERS: I take your guidance.

Ms Grace interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for McConnell, you have had your turn.

Mr SAUNDERS: Public servants are valued. I did not know that the CFMMEU looked after public servants. I have been around the union movement and the labour movement all my life and I have learnt something new today. I have learnt that the CFMMEU looks after public servants. There we are. I have learnt something from the member for Lockyer. I will take that away. You can always teach an old dog new tricks.

This bill looks after public servants. I agree with the member for Lockyer when he spoke about—and I hope he reminds his colleagues of this—the great work that public servants do in our community. Every time we hear those opposite talk about public servants to their media friends, they say that public servants are fat cats that sit in offices, get driven to work in limousines and have their coffee machines. That is their interpretation when they talk to their friends about public servants.

In fact, public servants are people like corrections officers. Public servants are keeping our community safe. They are the people who take blood in our hospitals. They are the school cleaners. They are the people who work in our hospitals and assist with the PTSS so people can travel to get medical help. They are the frontline public servants that those opposite cut and that they are saying we are now crawling up to. No, we are not.

What this traditional Labor government has always done since 2015 is respect public servants. It values the work that public servants do in our community. We look after public servants. They showed how well they looked after public servants. Before they interject, I will ask whether they remember the pooper scooper. Who remembers the former premier and the opposition leader talking about getting the pooper scooper out to get rid of public servants? We remember it and public servants remember it.

I was on the street in Maryborough last week when a senior public servant came to me and said that people are fearful of the election because if those opposite get in again their jobs could go. It is all about getting rid of public servants. We look after public servants and they come out and bash them. They go back to the community and say, 'Public servants are lazy and do not do anything. There are too many public servants. The Public Service bill has blown out.' That is what they are implying every time. This legislation values public servants. That is what we on this side of the House do. We value public servants. We love public servants.

Mr Watts interjected.

Mr SAUNDERS: I hear the carping from the other side. They are talking about the pay freeze. They only did what they did because they want to be popular. They want everyone to forget about 2012 to 2015. They want everyone to forget 2012 to 2015: 'Let's blank it out. Let's use white-out on it and forget that it ever happened. It never happened in Queensland.' Well, it did.

Mr Powell interjected.

Mr SAUNDERS: I hear the member for Glass House.

Mr Power: He wanted to sell assets.

Mr SAUNDERS: He wanted to sell assets. We go back to this again.

Opposition members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms McMillan): Order! Members to my left and member for Logan, we shall start again. I call the member for Maryborough.

Mr SAUNDERS: We talk about what happened to public servants between 2012 and 2015. I have been brought up to understand that the Public Service should be able to give fear and frank advice to the government. We hear them talking about what is going on but we do not hear them talk about Michael Caltabiano. We do not hear about the former director-general of Transport. We do not hear them talk about him because he is on the backburner now. We do not know whether he is a member of their party anymore. He is gone.

When I talk to the public servants in my electorate, they are very happy with a Labor government. They are very happy that the respect for public servants has come back. They are more than happy that a Labor government has returned integrity to the Public Service.

One thing that we always notice with the LNP is that they talk tough—'We're going to do this and we're going to do that'—but leopards do not change their spots. If they get a chance to get on the treasury bench after 31 October, all I will say is: public servants beware, because they will cut, sack and sell. They will also try to privatise as much of the Public Service as they can. One thing they are good at—

Opposition members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Member for Maryborough, come back to the bill.

Mr SAUNDERS: I will, Madam Deputy Speaker. I will come back to the long title of the bill. Thank you for your guidance, once again. They are good at one thing: they are good at putting public money into private pockets. I commend the bill to the House. I thank the minister for looking after our public servants in Queensland.