




Speech By
Daniel Purdie

MEMBER FOR NINDERRY

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COMMUNITY SERVICES INDUSTRY (PORTABLE LONG SERVICE LEAVE) BILL

 **Mr PURDIE** (Ninderry—LNP) (11.52 am): Today I rise to make a short contribution on the Community Services Industry (Portable Long Service Leave) Bill. I thank my colleagues for letting me, at late notice, jump the order because I want to specifically address the amendments in relation to the Public Service pay freeze. Everyone on this side of the House and all Queenslanders appreciate the work that our public servants do, particularly our frontline services like the police, our ambos, nurses and teachers. They have a long history in this state of standing up time and time again. They have always done so and will continue to do so, and it is our police in particular that I want to address.

Government members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr McArdle): Stop the clock. Members to my right, the member has the call.

Mr PURDIE: I particularly want to focus my comments on the police, as a former police officer and now as the shadow spokesman for police. Police have a long history of standing up when we ask them to. Whether it is a planned event like CHOGM, G20 or more recently the Commonwealth Games which require a lot of planning and detail, our police have always risen to those challenges. Whether they are unplanned events like the many disasters we unfortunately experience in Queensland—cyclones, the fires which impacted my electorate around Peregian only late last year or floods—our police rapidly respond to that changing environment. Like never before, they have had to stand up and protect us from a global pandemic. When I went through the police academy there was certainly no module about how to police a pandemic and I understand there is still not one now. In a very short amount of time our police had to rapidly adjust their protocols to do everything they could to keep us safe, and that is certainly what they did.

Traffic branch police, uniformed police and even detectives were asked to attend the homes of confirmed COVID-19 carriers to confirm that they were abiding by their isolation orders. We were asking our police to go to those people's homes and interact with people who were confirmed to have COVID-19. When the rest of us were being told to stay away and isolate and keep our distance, that is what we asked our police to do, together with our nurses, doctors and other frontline service personnel. Once again without any question or any shadow of a doubt, our police sprung into action and did that, and they did that well and they will always do that. However, not only did they put themselves in harm's way, so did our nurses and teachers. I want to acknowledge my wife, who is a primary school teacher. She and her colleagues, as all teachers did across Queensland, worked tirelessly and rapidly to reimagine how they could continue to educate kids in their class. They worked around the clock to get all of their learning material online, navigate the IT systems and roll that out while trying to manage at home as well. Our police, teachers and nurses were also taking on the risk of returning home after a day's work and potentially exposing their families to the virus.

That is why those on this side of the House are making a stand here today and opposing the amendments which will see the pay freeze to our frontline police and other emergency services and Public Service workers. We have asked them to step up again and put themselves and their families in

harm's way. This is not the time to be dishonouring their lawfully binding agreements. Those on this side of the House appreciate that a deal is a deal—a deal that was negotiated for some time in good faith and ratified by the Industrial Relations Commission. This is not just about the pay rise. Those EB agreements have other factors built into them about productivity, efficiency and training.

Ms Grace interjected.

Mr PURDIE: I acknowledge that the Minister for Industrial Relations is in the chamber, and I call on her to recognise that it is not too late. It is not too late for you to pull these amendments and give—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Through the chair, member.

Mr PURDIE: I call on the Minister for Industrial Relations to support the members of her union and pull this regulation and give them the lawfully binding agreements that they negotiated in good faith which will see particularly our frontline workers get the pay increases that they are entitled to.

I want to put on the record in the parliament that if Labor does use its numbers, like it often does, to barge this legislation through, if the LNP is elected on 31 October one thing we will particularly look at doing is reimbursing the most senior teachers, nurses and police across the state who are going to be adversely affected by this in their retirement. I received a very personal letter from a local principal. I do not want to go into too much detail and identify him, but he has worked across the state in remote communities and in the city as a teacher. He provided me with the calculations as to what this pay freeze is going to cost him, and it is not just the 2.5 per cent in the first year. It is tens of thousands of dollars. Doing that to people in our frontline services who have worked for decades across Queensland, who have stood up time and time again, is a slap in the face.

Ms Grace interjected.

Mr PURDIE: I urge the minister—I acknowledge her interjections now—that it is not too late to pull these amendments—

Ms Grace interjected.

Mr PURDIE:—or cross the floor to support our frontline workers.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Stop the clock. Minister, thank you for your support. I will run the House. You have made your point. You have made your contribution. The member has the call.

Mr PURDIE: A deal is a deal. We are calling on the government to support that, but also making a commitment that should the government barge this legislation through, which they often do, and should we become the government on 31 October we will not be looking to reverse the next deal in relation to the deferral. I do not want there to be any miscommunication out there. We are not opposing the deferral going forward. We are opposing this government tearing up binding financial certified agreements.

To wrap up, I was lucky enough to walk in and hear the tail end of the speech of the Minister for Child Safety, Youth and Women. I appreciate that she is now talking tough on youth crime, but I would like to draw her attention to 23 September last year when she was singing the praises of a bill that her government put before the House, the aim of which was to remove barriers that may contribute to children being refused bail in Queensland. I spoke on that bill. I highlighted that it would only transfer the problem from youth justice to the police. Here we are now with a youth crime epidemic. The police have had a gutful. More needs to be done.