




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR LOGAN

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**ANTI-DISCRIMINATION (RIGHT TO USE GENDER-SPECIFIC LANGUAGE)
AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mr POWER** (Logan—ALP) (6.36 pm): Recently, in a separate debate in this place, the member for Hinchinbrook asked members to imagine how others might see the world. In the debate on the Disability Parking Permit Scheme bill, he spoke about people who cannot see. He asked members to try to understand how those who have no sight might feel. He spoke of how important it was that members had put on blindfolds and were led around by guide dogs. He said—

This was to show us what it would be like to live with permanent blindness or vision impairment and for us to see how hard it was to walk through the course they had laid out for us.

The member's point was that, unless you have walked in the shoes of someone who experiences those challenges in our world and sees our world very differently, you would not really understand the challenges they face.

The member's point was well made and it is a good one. Of course, we can briefly experience blindness by putting on a hood that blocks our eyes. While it can be much more difficult to put ourselves in the shoes of those who have different challenges in life, the point of the member for Hinchinbrook is equally valid. We have to try to understand the special challenges that others face, even if it is not as simple as closing our eyes. The member for Capalaba spoke about those who do not see themselves easily fitting in to male or female roles. Those people face challenges related to how they are addressed and respected. We want to be able to see that, so the member for Hinchinbrook's point is very valid. We want to step into their shoes and imagine how they feel. We want to treat them with respect and make their journey through life that much easier.

One of my problems with this private member's bill—and I have several—is that it does not set the standards that the member himself sets out. It does not ask Queenslanders to try to see the world from a different perspective; to try to walk in the shoes of others through the obstacles of life. Whenever possible, when we speak we can try to be inclusive and polite. We can ask ourselves, 'How would I feel if I were them and such language was used about me?'

This form of speech is in fact the traditional Queensland, welcoming and friendly form of speech. We as Queenslanders get people wanting to experience our state from all over the world—at least they used to, and we hope that they will again. One of the reasons they come here is that we are inclusive and we are polite in the way we deal with people—the traditional Queensland way. To legislate against the Queensland way of speech that seeks to include every Queenslander seems to me a step backwards. We need to get back to our good traditions of including everyone in being welcoming. That has been part of the Queensland way of life for a long time.

The other problem I have with this is: exactly what problem are we fixing? Which Queenslanders are worse off if we seek to reasonably include Queenslanders? I listened hard to the speeches of the few MPs who seemed to support this and the only people they could point out to me were a few undergraduates at universities who felt put upon when they were gently reminded of the academic

standards of writing that seek to be inclusive of all humans. This has been part of the academic standards of writing for some 50 years or longer in Queensland universities. What exactly is the great problem here? Queenslanders want to reasonably include everyone in their speech. We will not always get it right, but it is a fundamental Queensland value to seek to be inclusive of all.

We perhaps did not include the people who had lived in Australia for thousands of years before Europeans came here. Now we, in updating the Queensland way, try hard to be more inclusive by recognising the people who have endured this connection. In my case, that is mostly the Yugambeh Aboriginal people. This is a positive advancement of Queensland traditions and I am sure it is one that every member in this place supports.

I have to be frank: some people might know that I am not always perfect in my speech. I have not always used inclusive speech. I might never get something right or I might feel that some things are a little clunky to me. However, I can make one pledge to the people in Logan. As the member for Logan, I will always try to include every Logan resident. That is the inclusive Logan way and that is the inclusive Queensland way of speech.