




Speech By
Nikki Boyd

MEMBER FOR PINE RIVERS

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WORKING WITH CHILDREN LEGISLATION (INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES) AMENDMENT BILL

 **Ms BOYD** (Pine Rivers—ALP) (5.59 pm): I rise to make a brief contribution to the Working with Children Legislation (Indigenous Communities) Amendment Bill 2018. I do so because in the 55th Parliament I was a member of the legal affairs committee. Along with the chair, the member for Stretton and the members for Capalaba, Coomera, Scenic Rim and the former member for Currumbin, we undertook travel in relation to the private member's bill before that parliament. In doing so, we travelled to Yarrabah, Hope Vale and Doomadgee. Although that travel occurred in September 2017, I have a number of vivid memories in relation to that travel about which it is worthwhile making a short contribution to the House.

It has been said tonight and also in previous debates around this bill that the blue card system has limitations, but my point is that those limitations are the inherent protections that exist for vulnerable people within our community. Absolutely we should strive for improvement, but we should do so cautiously and carefully. We should be very prudent around that. From my professional background as an early childhood educator and as a mum, I want to ensure that all children in our community have those protections that a system like the blue card system is innately designed to provide.

The member for Hill said that there was much community feedback in the formation of this bill. While travelling on the road, we found such a divergence of views around the types of offences that should be covered by and have exception for within this bill. There was also a divergence of views from members of the community justice group insofar as whether they would want to play a part in determining whether their peers, relatives and neighbours would have the opportunity for exemption and be able to work in community. The takeaway for me was that from the community members we spoke to there was some real reluctance in terms of being the decision-makers of the community justice groups, but also not having a clear position in terms of what offences were acceptable or not acceptable in the provision of the bill.

My takeaway from this experience in travelling to the remote communities was that there is much more work to be done. This is why I am very pleased to see in the 56th Parliament that this bill has come before it and had the full, thorough and robust committee process that it deserves, because it is absolutely demonstrated that there is a desire from everyone in this House to ensure that people right across our community have the dignity of work and the dignity of a job. In doing so, we need to ensure that the most vulnerable people in our community are protected.

I am very heartened to see the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice's recommendation 2 in relation to the progression of the development and implementation of the strategy and action plan. That will be coming to members of the House so that we can continue the good work in terms of shining a light on this issue and working perhaps to address a system that could potentially have a light shined in some areas and some tweaks made but in a way that offers protection for the vulnerable in the community into the future.

I thank the member for Traeger for introducing the bill yet again and the Education, Employment and Small Business Committee for its work in fully investigating the bill. I look forward to further updates from the Attorney as this progresses. In summing up, it is not a bill that I support but I am keen to see further development in this space as time progresses.