




Speech By  
**Tim Mander**

**MEMBER FOR EVERTON**

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Record of Proceedings, 18 June 2020

**ELECTORAL AND OTHER LEGISLATION (ACCOUNTABILITY, INTEGRITY AND OTHER MATTERS) AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (11.49 am): I rise to speak in the debate on the Electoral and Other Legislation (Accountability, Integrity and Other Matters) Amendment Bill 2019. There has been plenty of debate about the issues in this particular bill. In my contribution, I want to focus on the parts of the bill that relate to the new offences to apply to a minister who knowingly fails to disclose a conflict of interest with the intent to dishonestly gain a benefit for themselves or another person or cause detriment to another person or where a minister intentionally fails to update their statement of interests.

It is very important to understand the journey that has led to the government having to introduce this legislation into the House. This originated as a result of the behaviour of the former deputy premier and treasurer, the member for South Brisbane.

**Mr Krause:** De facto Premier.

**Mr MANDER:** I will take the interjection from my colleague, the member from Scenic Rim—the de facto Premier.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Pause the clock. Members in this chamber will be referred to by their appropriate parliamentary title. I ask you to withdraw.

**Mr MANDER:** I withdraw. It became obvious that the former treasurer and deputy premier, the member for South Brisbane, failed to disclose in her pecuniary interest register the purchase of a property at Dutton Park. When that came to light, the former deputy premier claimed that the reason it was not declared was that her husband had bought the property without her being notified.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. I will seek some advice. Sorry to interrupt you. Member for Everton, I remind you of the Speaker's ruling in relation to this matter. You are certainly able to talk about the genesis of the legislation, but I caution you about exploring the detail of the matter that is before the Ethics Committee. It is a tricky line to tread; I appreciate that. I bring that to your attention.

**Mr MANDER:** Thank you for the guidance, Mr Deputy Speaker. I am very conscious of the Speaker's ruling that you have outlined. There was a nondeclaration of this property purchase. It was then declared after questioning around this. These are all things that the former deputy premier has admitted on the public record herself. She said that she was not aware of the purchase at the time it took place and that that was because her husband had made that purchase.

What then came out is that this property is in the vicinity of a project that the former deputy premier was responsible for—that being the construction of Cross River Rail. This property was going to potentially benefit from any uplift in value given its location. That led to some speculation about why that declaration was not made. In a radio interview the former deputy premier was asked about whether it seemed a bit unusual that she did not know about a purchase made by her husband. She stated, 'In fact, on reflection my husband sent me a text message to advise me of that purchase.' This again seemed to be an unusual explanation.

There was then speculation about some of the deliberations around the location of the stations for Cross River Rail—that is, whether the station should be at Dutton Park, where it was eventually decided it should be, or whether it should be at the PA Hospital where there would be more people using it. There was speculation about the property and the proximity of the property to the project. Given this speculation, the LNP referred the issue to the CCC.

Then the former deputy premier, the member for South Brisbane, referred the matter herself to the CCC. During an estimates hearing the member for South Brisbane admitted and voluntarily offered up the fact that she had rung the personal mobile of the CCC chair on a Sunday to advise him that she would be fully cooperating with the CCC.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order, members! Pause the clock. I will take some advice. Member for Everton, I have reminded you of the Speaker's ruling. It is my view that you are delving too deeply into the facts behind the matters that are before the Ethics Committee.

**Mr Krause:** Protection racket.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Everton, would you mind resuming your seat. Member for Scenic Rim, I assume it was you who said 'protection racket' from the protection of standing behind a member who was on their feet. I will place you on a warning. Member for Everton, it is my ruling that you are delving too far into the substance of those matters. I would ask you to come back to the genesis of the matter as it pertains to the bill.

**Mrs D'ATH:** I rise to a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. In relation to your ruling and the comments made by the member for Scenic Rim, I point out that I did not actually hear those comments, but now that they have been put into the record I find them unparliamentary and ask that they be withdrawn.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Scenic Rim, the Leader of the House has asked that your comments be withdrawn. I would ask you to withdraw those comments.

**Mr KRAUSE:** I withdraw.

**Mr MANDER:** The nub of the argument that I am outlining is that the reason this legislation has been introduced into the House is a CCC investigation and recommendations about the behaviour of the former deputy premier and treasurer, the member for South Brisbane. The other reason this is before the House is that the Premier refused to uphold the standards contained in the Ministerial Code of Conduct. There was no reason this legislation should ever come into the House because there are other available avenues for disciplinary action to be taken by the Premier against the member for South Brisbane. They are contained in the Ministerial Code of Conduct.

The Premier refused to act. The reason she refused to act is that she lacked authority in her own party room. Any other premier or leader of any substance would have taken action using the Ministerial Code of Conduct, but this Premier did not do that. Because the Premier did not do that, the CCC felt that it had to make recommendations. The CCC cleared the member for South Brisbane of any official corruption. However, the CCC chair said that the behaviour of the member for South Brisbane should be regarded as unacceptable and there should be a penalty associated with that.

That is why we are here today talking about this particular provision. The Premier of this state lacked the authority to take action against her former deputy premier. Because of that, here we are today having to legislate for integrity and morality. That is what we are doing here. There are long-held practices of this parliament that the Premier could have used but which she did not use because she lacked authority.

Even with this situation that I have outlined, this government has still refused to enact what the CCC recommended. The CCC slammed Labor's laws because they do not go far enough to encourage transparency and reduce corruption risk. The chair of the CCC when interviewed said, 'It duplicates them and provides a lesser penalty, so it lowers the bar rather than raises it in one sense.' Even when the CCC made recommendations and the government made a song and dance about accepting all of the recommendations, they refused to accept the CCC's recommendation with regard to this particular clause in the bill.

This government over the last five years has been racked with integrity issues, whether it is the member for Millar with regard to mangocube—

**Mr Nicholls:** The former member for Bundaberg.

**Mr MANDER:** I take that interjection from the member for Clayfield—the former member for Bundaberg.

**Mr Nicholls** interjected.

**Mr MANDER:** Thank you for reminding me. There are so many. It is hard to remember them all. There was also the now Deputy Premier and Minister for Health and his behaviour with regard to the dodgy poll about the name of the Lady Cilento hospital. There are other matters before the Ethics Committee at the moment which I cannot mention and I will not mention.

This government is racked with integrity scandals. Do not think with the resignation of the former deputy premier that these integrity scandals will go away. They will not go away. We will remind the people of Queensland that this is a government that cannot be trusted. They cannot run themselves, and the Premier has zero authority over her party room.

*(Time expired)*