




Speech By
Joseph Kelly

MEMBER FOR GREENSLOPES

Record of Proceedings, 17 November 2021

JUSTICE LEGISLATION (COVID-19 EMERGENCY RESPONSE—PERMANENCY) AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (2.25 pm): I would like to assure the member for Currumbin that members on this side of the House did listen to the advice put forward by the LNP in relation to handling the pandemic. Many of the people who listened suffered whiplash from violently shaking their heads. Several other people rolled around the floor laughing and when they finally picked themselves up, they realised that probably what we should do is listen to the health advice being provided by the Chief Health Officer and other fine people.

This bill is seeking to make permanent a range of matters that have come into play as a result of the pandemic. I would like to acknowledge the work of the minister and the committee in relation to this bill. I will come to the committee's contribution in a moment. I also want to acknowledge the many people who made submissions to this bill. It is a testament to how broad-ranging this bill is, the variety of people who made submissions.

I want to start with the thoughts of my union, the Queensland Nurses and Midwives' Union, and the support that they give, which I also give, to the move to make permanent the changes in relation to enabling nurse practitioners to carry out capacity assessments, necessary to making an advance health directive. Anybody who has a background in health care will know the turf wars that often erupt between various health professions, but I think it is really important that all professional groups rise above those turf wars and start to think about how we use all professionals to the full extent of their scope of practice. If we do that, we will get significantly better outcomes.

I am really pleased to be part of a government that looked at what pharmacists can contribute and were able to now push pharmacists into the field in terms of vaccinations which has been a really important part of responding to this. I certainly support that part of the legislation.

I turn my attention to the parts of the legislation that deal with domestic and family violence and changing the way that people interact with the criminal justice system. Last night I spoke about Sue and Lloyd Clarke receiving the Queensland Australians of the Year award and the foundation that they started, the Small Steps 4 Hannah Foundation, which is aimed at ending domestic violence generally, but also looks specifically at coercive control. We know that coercive control does not happen in one place or a location; it is a function of a dysfunctional relationship, if I can put it that way, and it can happen anywhere at any time, including in a courtroom situation.

I note that the Women's Legal Service of Queensland supported these provisions because they have direct experience of this in a practical sense. I also note that the QLS talked about the fact that, while they felt that having a person give evidence and be able to be cross-examined in a live court setting was the best way to guarantee very sound evidence, the reality is that they said also it has to be acknowledged there are times when we need to step away from that model, so they were supportive of this as well.

Every Wednesday the Queensland Women's Legal Service provide legal service support at the Holland Park courthouse, where there is a domestic violence list. When I was first elected they asked me to come down and have a look at the facilities there. We had people who were victims of alleged domestic violence and people who had been accused of domestic violence separated from each other by a small partition. The reality is that you did not have to be very tall to look over this partition. Often the victims were confronted by the people they were accusing of domestic violence and, sadly, many of them were talked out of pursuing those matters. I am really pleased to say that, after representations to various attorneys-general and thanks to the hard work of the registrar of the Holland Park courthouse, we have been able to put in much better facilities there. This shows me that the issue of coercive control can follow victims into the judicial process. That is why these provisions are really quite important. I note the support of the Women's Legal Service for these provisions and I certainly support them as well.

I turn my attention to the provisions that relate to the sale of alcohol from cafes and restaurants. I acknowledge the work of the committee in relation to that. I would like to see the range of beverages expanded. I read pretty carefully the submission from FARE. I always take their submissions very seriously. The last time I worked at the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital, in the rehab unit, I estimate that on any given day 50 per cent to 75 per cent of the patients were there because of problems related to alcohol, either abuse of or injury because of. I have seen the impacts of alcohol in our healthcare system.

From my perspective, people buying alcohol from a cafe or a restaurant in a relatively small quantity to have with a meal represents a very low risk to the community. To me, this does not represent anything that would nearly resemble the sorts of damaging or binge-drinking behaviour that I saw when I was working most recently at the Royal Brisbane hospital and that we know is quite a significant problem in our community and in our culture. In fact, most cafe and restaurant owners will go to great lengths to ensure that the beverages people drink are part of the entire dining experience. It is probably helping us to form good habits in relation to alcohol and break some of those not-so-great Anglo-Saxon habits around the consumption of alcohol. I do not excuse myself from those, either.

I would like to see greater options in this regard. During the COVID pandemic shutdowns, I worked with a whole range of small businesses—cafes and restaurants—in my electorate. We ran a thing called #thetakeawaymessage campaign. We used the power of social media to try to motivate people to do what they were already wanting to do naturally, which is to support local people who were doing it tough. About 40 cafes and restaurants participated. During each of those lockdowns we would pick one particular day and use that to motivate everyone to get out and buy takeaway food. I have to say that it was pretty successful. People were looking to support those businesses. In accordance with these provisions, many people, as well as buying a meal, took the opportunity to buy some wine.

I looked at the submission from the Griffith Uni Bar and Function Centre by my good friend Chris Edwards. Chris owns Australian Catering Services. He has been around the catering industry. He is involved with Restaurant & Catering Australia. When he comes to see you, it is worth listening to what he says. Right throughout this pandemic he has said that that small measure has allowed many small cafes and restaurants to remain viable and keep their heads above water. He is supportive of this change. Obviously he would like to see it broadened as well.

That is a really important part of what we have done as a government. This bill, at its core, is about starting to lay the platform for COVID recovery. If you are going to recover from COVID, you have to do a number of things. You have to invest in infrastructure. We have been doing that, particularly in my electorate, with the Veloway investments, Cross River Rail, school investments and sporting infrastructure. You have to make sure you invest in skills and training. We have done that through Skilling Queenslanders for Work, with organisations like Vision Australia receiving funding. You have to make sure that you continue to look for ways to expand your economy. The most recent announcements in relation to hydrogen are an important part of that economic expansion. Where we have problems and challenges, we have to target assistance to people, and we have done that. The tourism dollars and the small business grants are great examples. Importantly, if you are going to recover from COVID you also have to back small business. This provision in this bill is about backing small business. This is COVID recovery.

I support the provisions in relation to domestic violence, to cafes being able to sell alcohol and to nurse practitioners. I support the other elements in the bill, but I do not have time to talk through those today. I commend the bill to the House.