




Speech By
Brittany Lauga

MEMBER FOR KEPPEL

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**COAL MINING SAFETY AND HEALTH AND OTHER LEGISLATION
AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Ms LAUGA** (Keppel—ALP) (6.56 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Coal Mining Safety and Health and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022, a bill which further strengthens the safety requirements set out in the Coal Mining Safety and Health Act. It is interesting to hear the member for Burdekin stand up in this place and talk about how they are all friends of coalmining workers and friends of workers when he stood up in this place and voted against industrial manslaughter laws. He talks the talk, but does not walk the walk. He pretends that he cares. He is all care and no responsibility. There are numerous other pieces of legislation that have been debated and discussed in this place, and plenty of debate about mineworkers' safety or worker safety. There have been opportunities for the member for Burdekin to stand up and say that he supports that, to vote with his feet by actually voting in support of legislation like the industrial manslaughter legislation, but, no, that did not happen.

In speaking in support of this bill, I must disclose that I am a member of the Mining and Energy Union Queensland District and the Australian Manufacturing Workers' Union, both of which are noted on my Register of Members' Interests. I am proud that the MEU and AMWU have represented coalmine workers for decades on all matters related to employment, with a particular focus on health and safety matters in the coal sector.

It was a real privilege recently to join the member for Toowoomba South and a number of our other colleagues in this place at the Parliamentary Friends of Resources site visit at the Kestrel Coal Mine just near Emerald where we undertook an underground coalmine tour. There is plenty of talk in this place about coalmines, particularly on safety, but not a lot of members have been underground and seen the environmental controls, the workers' health and safety and the industrial conditions, the really tough and dangerous conditions that mineworkers work in, particularly those underground. I note that 10 members of this place attended that site visit, though the two members of the Queensland Greens did not attend. When I wrote to them, one replied to say that they were too busy to attend. I find it interesting that particularly the Greens come into this place and have a lot to say about mining, but do not actually spend the time to go and see exactly what goes on in our Queensland mines.

We did notice that it is dark and definitely cold in places underground but humid in others. It is dangerous. I was certainly a tad nervous. I just told myself it was like a Dreamworld ride. It was all completely safe. The expertise of the miners, the operators, the maintenance crew and the engineers made me feel confident and helped me realise just how amazing these teams of people are at what they do.

Before we all appreciated that mining is a dangerous job, but now, as a result of this site tour underground, we have an even greater understanding of the environmental controls, safety and rehabilitation of mining in Queensland. I say thank you to Rachel Stewart and Ian Macfarlane of the Queensland Resources Council and Kestrel's mine manager Bernie Lambley and his team for hosting us on this important fact-finding mission.

I am proud that the Palaszczuk government has always put workers and their safety at the centre of our policymaking. In doing so the Palaszczuk government has always put resource workers and their safety at the centre of our governing. That is what this bill is all about. Queensland has the toughest mine safety and health laws in the world.