




Speech By
Cynthia Lui

MEMBER FOR COOK

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INTEGRITY AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

PUBLIC SECTOR BILL

 **Ms LUI** (Cook—ALP) (6.55 pm): I rise to speak on the Public Sector Bill 2022 and the Integrity and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. I acknowledge the Premier and Minister Grace. I also acknowledge the members of the Economics and Governance Committee and the committee chair, the member for Logan, as well as the committee secretary and Hansard, for their work in the examination of the bills. I will focus mostly on the Public Sector Bill during this debate.

When it comes to the public sector, we must never forget the legacy of Campbell Newman, who was the one responsible for sacking 14,000 public servants. Public sector workers deserve to feel safe and secure in their jobs. They deserve to have peace of mind. What public sector workers did not deserve is the way in which Campbell Newman savagely cut their jobs, including the jobs of 4,400 health staff, 1,800 of whom were nurses and midwives.

I fully support the Public Sector Bill, which is based on an independent review of public sector employment laws by Mr Peter Bridgman entitled *A fair and responsive public sector for all*. The review made 99 recommendations to ensure a fair, responsive and inclusive public sector. The Queensland government accepted all recommendations in full or in principle and, on 6 July 2020, endorsed a two-stage approach to implementing the recommendations.

Stage 1 public sector reforms were implemented through the passage of the Public Service and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2020 to ensure the immediate implementation of recommendations related to maximising the government's commitment to employment security and providing Public Service employees with access to positive performance management. The Public Sector Bill 2022 proposes to implement stage 2 public sector reforms by replacing the Public Service Act 2008 and giving effect to the Bridgman review's primary recommendation to provide all public sector employees with a modern, simplified and employee focused legislative framework. To ensure that public sector employment arrangements are cohesive, the bill amends other acts that regulate the employment of particular public sector employees including the Ambulance Service Act 1991 and the Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990.

The bill will give effect to the remaining legislative Bridgman review recommendations—in particular, to establish an employee focused legislative framework that can further the Queensland government's commitment to being fair, responsive and a leader in public administration. The bill also responds to recommendations of the Coaldrake report, advice of the joint advisory committee and government stakeholders, together with approaches taken in other jurisdictions including the New Zealand public service legislation. The object of the bill is to modernise public sector employment laws and to rejuvenate the capability and capacity of the public sector workforce in response to the Bridgman review and the Coaldrake report.

The bill proposes to achieve this by outlining the entities and employees to which it applies; supporting the government's commitment to reframing its relationship with Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples; creating a nation-leading framework requiring chief executives of public sector entities to take steps to promote an oversight of equity, diversity, respect and inclusion; reforming recruitment and selection processes, including clarifying how equity and diversity considerations may factor into recruitment and selection decisions; establishing public sector employment conditions and arrangements including employment security with universal application to all public sector employees within the scope of the bill; simplifying or amalgamating existing concepts and arrangements in the current act including rulings and guidelines, work performance and interchange arrangements, commission reviews and administrative inquiries; and creating a Public Sector Governance Council as the central oversight body for whole-of-sector governance and the Public Sector Commission as the central human resources agency.

Our government's commitment to treaty in this state means that we can now work towards reframing the relationship with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in this state to promote cultural safety and capability in the public sector. The bill seeks to strengthen the government's relationship with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the public sector by requiring public sector entities to recognise the importance of the right to self-determination to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

This bill speaks volumes for equity, diversity, respect and inclusion. The bill seeks to strengthen existing equality of employment opportunity requirements and places positive duties on chief executives of public sector entities, the Police Service and other prescribed entities to ensure programs, policies and practices promote equity, diversity, respect and inclusion.

In relation to the lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, intersex and queer community, this bill responds to the discrimination or harassment experienced by the LGBTIQ+ community in their employment. The visibility of the LGBTIQ+ cohort is enhanced under this bill by requiring entities to promote a workplace culture of respect and inclusion, including for people of diverse sexual orientations, gender identities or intersex variations, and enabling equity and diversity plans to address matters for LGBTIQ+ people including to promote their respect and inclusion. This bill puts a framework in place to protect the rights of the LGBTIQ+ community to ensure they, too, receive respect and inclusion in the workplace.

The Public Sector Bill and the Integrity and Other Legislation Amendment Bill are good, solid reforms that will deliver strong measures to encourage transparency and increase accountability in the public sector. I commend both bills to the House.