



Speech By
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MEMBER FOR BROADWATER

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MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Queensland Floods; Integrity in Government

 **Mr CRISAFULLI** (Broadwater—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (2.00 pm): As this is the first opportunity I have had to rise to my feet in this place since the devastation that we have seen in a large part of our state, I place on record on behalf of the opposition our heartfelt sympathies to the families of those who have lost lives in the flooding tragedy, to those who have had their family home inundated or their business destroyed—and in many cases without any form of insurance to give them a helping hand—and to those community groups who have been forced to go in and see decades of work washed away. On behalf of us all, we acknowledge what a significant event it was. We give our heartfelt sympathies to the SES, the councils, the state government employees, the Army and the team from the Rapid Relief Team—wonderful to see those red shirts during a disaster—who always mobilise. Again today, we ask the government to make sure that this review is a serious review.

There are three things that we particularly want to see that will make the way that we handle disasters better in the future: messaging, mitigation and betterment. As I went around the state and spoke with people, the common theme was that they took comfort from the Premier's statement on Saturday that things were not going to be as bad as 2011. That messaging was not up to scratch. So, too, was the schools messaging, things changing across different platforms, a different name of a different recovery coordinator in the space of one tweet—messaging must be improved.

Secondly, I speak of mitigation. We must get back to a culture in this state where we are prepared to build infrastructure to protect communities: levees, dams, drainage. Those things matter in the hour of need, and they have been absent for the past seven years. Finally, I speak of betterment—an ongoing program that we will continue to build resilience in our infrastructure so we do not keep replacing the same things in the same location to the same standard and expect a different result.

Another issue that needs betterment is the integrity of this government. Today we saw the next level of a Premier who is prepared to put her head in the sand. I have seen and expected the deflections, attacks and all of the games that have been played, but to have the leader of the state say to a whistleblower who had reported allegations of misogynistic and disgraceful comments to 'get in a room' was an absolute disgrace. We have seen the support groups today bravely speak up, because no doubt they will be getting phone calls and will get heavied from those opposite. What about some of the comments from Hearts of Purple where they said—

In our view the Premier's comments are damaging and could deter women from coming forward if they are a victim of workplace misogyny. We call on the Premier to immediately retract her statement and encourage victims of misogynistic workplace bullying to follow the correct protocol to ensure all women can feel safe and supported in the workplace.

The Premier has taken great comfort—somehow from her transcript yesterday—that it was not as big a train wreck as everybody in this place and in the gallery thought it was. There they are this morning trying to quote from the transcript. The beauty about it is that it is whole. It started with the Premier saying they should get back to work and they should sort their issues out. Then the clanger, 'How would you suggest they sort it out?' 'Well, they could sit in a room and have a full and frank

discussion.' I am sorry, but the bit about a mediator or negotiator did not happen until right at the end of the press conference when a Channel 7 representative said, 'Would it really be appropriate for her to sit in a room with Mr Setter?' That is when the idea of a mediator came on. We will return to that subject in a moment.

First, I ask this question on behalf of every Queenslanders, because it is the one that people want to know: why is it that the Premier would make a judgement call to tell a victim of bullying to get in a room with a perpetrator? Well, there are only two reasons: one, the Premier is so out of touch with reality these days, her judgement is so clouded, that she believes that to be the new normal—she believes that whatever she says is the way that things just have to be; or, two, Mr Setter must be protected at all costs, because Mr Setter knows about Labor lobbyists. Mr Setter knows about the hit job on the Office of the Integrity Commissioner. Mr Setter knows about the backgrounding that has been going on from the 30 media spinners. Mr Setter knows about the raid. I reckon Mr Setter knows what is on the laptop. Why is he a protected species? Because Mr Setter has become an anvil around the ankle of this government. If he goes down, the Premier goes down. As a result, he is being protected at the expense of a whistleblower.

Can you imagine the cries from those opposite if it had been someone other than their own who levelled an allegation such as that? Just on the mediation that the Premier says she is so passionate about, the Integrity Commissioner asked for it a year ago! A year ago this week, the Integrity Commissioner asked the former director-general for it. Then the current director-general was made aware of it—and yet nothing. Yet yesterday because they needed a bit of a pressure relief valve, that became the buzzword: 'Well, get some mediation.' No, this was not about providing real mediation; it was about how things look rather than how they are. That has been the consistent throughout this.

It was a failure of leadership. It was a disappointing press conference but what is more disappointing is that, having made that mistake, the Premier came into this place to double down on some of the worst, most offensive comments made by a leader in this state. That is wrong. That is a lack of leadership. The Integrity Commissioner wants to continue to serve in this role, because the Integrity Commissioner wants to get to the bottom of an integrity inferno burning through this government. Yet yesterday the Premier said that she will not—because there is a culture in this place: if you speak up, you get chased out the door. We have seen it all too many times. We have seen it with the state archivist, with independents—

Government members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Order!

Mr CRISAFULLI: A culture where they get chased out the door.

Mr Bailey interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, member for Miller!

Mr Harper interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, member for Thuringowala!

Mr CRISAFULLI: Mr Deputy Speaker, please do not accept the nonsense that the Premier cannot rescind this resignation. For goodness sake, she lost one from her chief of staff once! That one was with filed in the wrong place. There is nothing stopping the Premier allowing a brave public servant to continue, aside from the fact that she is asking questions that hit a little too close to home—questions about Labor lobbyists operating in a government funded building, questions about a system where ministers are nothing but a puppet, a play thing, where people can get money in a brown paper bag and then make the minister dance like a little teddy bear. That is the culture that she wants to blow the whistle on.

Government members interjected.

Mr Bailey interjected.

Mr CRISAFULLI: In the one minute I have remaining I make this plea to every Queenslanders: we will not waver on our quest for a government that values integrity and transparency.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, member for Miller!

Mr CRISAFULLI: I will say why: because when governments give up on governing with integrity, they give up on governing for you. It becomes about their mates. It becomes about how things look rather than how they are. In this state, we have to end this.

This integrity inferno is burning this government to a crisp. What we have seen from the Premier was an abject failure of leadership—asking a whistleblower who has raised misogynistic slurs to get in a room with the bully. The Integrity Commissioner in this state wants to know about Labor lobbyists. She wants to know what is on the laptop. The Integrity Commissioner wants a royal commission into this—

(Time expired)