




Speech By
Hon. Grace Grace

MEMBER FOR MCCONNEL

Record of Proceedings, 30 March 2022

PUBLIC HEALTH AND OTHER LEGISLATION (EXTENSION OF EXPIRING PROVISIONS) AMENDMENT BILL

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (3.49 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Public Health and Other Legislation (Extension of Expiring Provisions) Amendment Bill. Queensland has done a remarkable job managing the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. One only has to listen to the previous speaker to know why he had to resign from the shadow ministry for holding a street party at the height of a world health pandemic.

Mr HART: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order.

Honourable members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Lui): Can I remind the chamber to cease all cross-chamber interjections. What is your point of order, member for Burleigh?

Mr HART: Noting your ruling on the member for Toowoomba North a few minutes ago, I would ask you to apply the same rule on relevance to the minister.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Burleigh, I am listening carefully to the minister's contribution and her contribution is in line with the long title of the bill.

Ms GRACE: We are in the middle of a world health pandemic. The way that Queenslanders have risen to the occasion to ensure that we have kept Queensland safe has been remarkable. We are leading the world and they are looking to what we did in this state to manage an outbreak of a very serious virus that has not only affected Queensland, that has not only affected Australia, but has affected the whole world. Listening to those opposite, one would swear that we were hearing of a virus that was nothing more than a walk in the park. In my 63 years of being alive I have never before lived through a world health pandemic.

A government member: You don't look it!

Ms GRACE: Thank you! I thought I would throw that in for good measure. We were one of the first states in this nation to quickly and decisively put in place measures to keep Queenslanders safe. That is what this extension is all about. People think we are out of the woods. Look around; we are not out of the woods yet. It is premature to suggest that these powers should be diminished on some notion of freedom and people being able to do what they want.

Queenslanders have had a pretty good run compared to the rest of the world, and compared to the rest of Australia, when it comes to what they have been able to do. It was when we opened the borders and the variant that we have at the moment came in that disruption was at its peak. That is exactly what we warned people would happen when the borders opened: that it would spread, people would need to take time off, they would need to isolate and businesses and ordinary families would be impacted. That is exactly what happened. In fact, I was impacted myself. Thank goodness that I was triple vaccinated, as I know many others in this House are. Being triple vaccinated assisted me in getting over the virus. Let me tell members, when you get it, it is no walk in the park.

I want to thank Queenslanders, who have been admirable in playing the role that they needed to play to keep people safe. I commend the Premier on the role that she has played in leading this state.