




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR GREENSLOPES

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INTEGRITY AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

PUBLIC SECTOR BILL

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (2.16 pm): I support the bills. It is rare that I agree with those on the opposite side, but I agree with the member for Chatsworth's comments about things working best when the Public Service works together. I acknowledge that, ever since the address-in-reply speech he gave in 2015, the member for Chatsworth is the only member of the LNP who has acknowledged the mistakes of the Newman government. While I think he is sincere in what he is saying, I do not think the lessons have been learned.

It is also very rare that I agree with the member for Mermaid Beach, but I am going to do it on this occasion because I, too, would like more time to talk about the differences between the Labor Party and the LNP when it comes to the Public Service and integrity. While I would love more time to do that, I support our government's sensible and efficient running of this chamber and the parliament so I will restrict myself to the time available.

The treatment of the Public Service and integrity are just two of the many issues that clearly show how vast the divide between Labor and the LNP truly is. If we want to know what members opposite think about public servants we need look no further than the commentary from the member for Mudgeeraba when she referred to regional health workers as duds. In yesterday's debate, by way of interjection she tried to clarify that she did not call nurses duds; I can understand she meant that all other health workers are duds. In any case, it is a disgraceful thing to have said.

At its core, this bill is about the culture of the Public Service. I would like to relate a story from the mercifully short time the Newman government was in office to demonstrate the culture of the Public Service that was established by the Newman government that I believe will be re-established by a Crisafulli government. I was at a public venue that anybody could attend. I bumped into a senior public servant whom I knew quite well from the community. I had a lot in common with them; I do not particularly want to go through their details.

As we often did when we bumped into each other in the streets or the supermarkets, we stopped and had a chat about fairly innocuous things—kids, schools, sporting events, those sorts of things. This relatively senior public servant and I were having a chat when all of a sudden this person's partner came up and said, 'We have to leave now,' because the chief of staff of one of the senior Newman government ministers was at this same venue and they were so worried about being seen talking to someone who was a known Labor activist that they felt that that would damage their career moving forward in the Public Service. That happened before I was the preselected candidate. I had run for council. I was a known Labor activist at that time and these people were so fearful of retribution that they walked out of this venue; they fled this venue. It was actually very wise of them to have done that because at that point we were on our way to losing the 14,000 public servants that we would lose. With regard to the culture that was established in the Public Service at that stage, there could be no clearer demonstration than the story that I have just relayed.

This bill establishes the necessary requirements for a modern Public Service that is absolutely capable of providing frank and fearless advice, and I do want to focus on a couple of aspects of this bill.

Mrs Frecklington: Oh, you're going to get to the bill?

Mr KELLY: Yes. I take the member's interjection: I have been talking about the bill, but I would not expect the member opposite to understand anything that I have just said about treating public servants decently and establishing a public service bill that ensures that people are not fearful of being sacked over punitive measures like those that were employed by the previous government. The member clearly does not understand it, did not understand it from 2012 to 2015 and does not understand it now, but I am going to continue talking about the bill for the benefit of the member.

I want to talk about certain aspects of the bill. The aspect of the bill around the relationship with First Nations people is an incredibly important part of this bill and is an extremely important step forward for the Public Service. We all know—and I can tell members this from firsthand experience having been a public sector worker in the health setting—that our Public Service and our public sector, just as all of our society has done over the years, have contributed to the challenges and the problems that First Nations people face in our state. Therefore, it is extremely important that we make it a priority to reset that relationship. This bill certainly makes it very clear that as a government it is our priority that the Public Service does that as a priority. Yesterday in here we had a debate about the Uluru Statement from the Heart and we again demonstrated as a government what our commitments are and what we want to see happening based on what First Nations people have told us that they want to see happening. Sadly, we still do not know where the LNP stands in relation to that issue.

I do support the issues of reporting around equity and taking those matters into account in selection processes. In my opinion there is no better place to stand and deliver a speech and demonstrate the benefits of taking equity matters seriously than the parliament of Queensland, on this side of the House at least. As a party and as a government we have worked extremely hard to make sure that we address historical imbalances in gender equity—and how much better is our government for that? How much better is our caucus and how much better is our cabinet because we have achieved those things? As many in this House would know, those things have not been achieved easily and they have not been achieved quickly but have been achieved through a whole range of mechanisms, so tackling these issues in the Public Service will achieve similar sorts of outcomes.

I also want to talk about the provisions around temporary employment. It is absolutely essential that we continue to try to offer as many people as we can permanent employment in the public sector. I found yesterday's contribution from the member for South Brisbane fairly nonsensical when she talked about people fleeing interstate. This government has done more in this area than anyone else in this regard, and I have been involved as a public sector union official; I was involved since 2000 and as a union delegate much earlier than that. I have seen very many governments, yet this government has taken numerous steps forward in creating permanency for public servants and public sector workers. For the member for South Brisbane to get up and say that people are fleeing interstate because they cannot get a—

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Mr KELLY: The member for Nanango should go and check the interstate migration figures, because they would suggest that the absolute opposite is happening. People are flocking to Queensland, which is creating challenges for us here which we will acknowledge, because people are coming here to get the jobs that the Palaszczuk Labor government has created. To suggest that people are fleeing interstate is as ridiculous as many other things the member for South Brisbane does in this place.

I also want to talk about the integrity bill. The Palaszczuk government is a government that is not afraid to take on the big issues and the challenging issues. This bill implements the findings of the Coaldrake review and is part of an ongoing process of improving integrity in public administration. Those opposite like to lecture this side of the House on integrity, but they show no respect for those integrity processes. The shadow spokesperson for integrity has had nothing to say about the so-called laptop scandal. Even though the CCC has come out and said that there was no raid, no seized laptop and nothing out of the ordinary, those opposite have continued to peddle a nonsense line about this particular incident, showing zero integrity and led ably by their so-called shadow spokesperson for integrity, who has shown absolutely zero integrity when it comes to this issue.

(Time expired)