




Speech By  
**Kim Richards**

**MEMBER FOR REDLANDS**

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Record of Proceedings, 25 October 2022

### **RACING INTEGRITY AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Ms RICHARDS** (Redlands—ALP) (11.45 am): I rise to support the Racing Integrity Amendment Bill 2022. As we have heard, there are over 40,000 participants across all three codes in the Queensland racing industry who make a significant contribution to not only Queensland's economy but country Queensland's economy and the social fabric of our communities. I think everybody likes going to a race day, particularly to the greyhound racetrack out my way. The member for Capalaba is a very big supporter.

On 24 February 2022 the Racing Integrity Amendment Bill was introduced to the parliament and referred to the Education, Employment and Training Committee for consideration. I take this opportunity to thank the committee, my deputy chair and fellow committee members, particularly the member for Rockhampton and the member for Hinchinbrook. We all discovered that they have an absolutely keen interest in racing. The poor old member for Rockhampton lost his SookySooky La La throughout the course of this bill.

The key policy objective of the bill is to amend the Racing Integrity Act to reform the review processes for decisions made by stewards under the rules of racing by: replacing the current internal and external review processes for decisions made by racing stewards under the rules of racing with review by an independent panel—we heard how important this process is going to be in terms of alleviating some of the pressures on QCAT at the moment in hearing these matters; ensuring reviews are finalised within a reasonable timeframe; and reducing serious welfare, human safety or integrity risks by preventing relevant decisions from being stayed pending hearing of an appeal by QCAT. The bill also provides for the online publication of stewards' reports and makes a number of minor technical amendments.

As we heard, consultation occurred through the Get Involved portal back in 2019. The then local government, racing and multicultural affairs minister announced some proposed changes to the review process in an industry forum on 16 September 2020. There has been targeted consultation throughout the process. I take the opportunity to thank the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries for their assistance in this bill. They undertook wide, targeted stakeholder sessions with the Thoroughbred Alliance, the Queensland Jockeys' Association, the Australian Jockeys' Association and Harness Racing Australia to provide input into this bill.

In our inquiry process, we invited stakeholders to make written submissions. We received six submissions—from the Australian Jockeys' Association, Mr Daniel Bowden, Racing Queensland, the Queensland Jockeys' Association, the Coalition for the Protection of Greyhounds and the Queensland Law Society. Advice was received from the department on issues that were raised within that, and we received a briefing in March from the department followed by a public hearing where we heard from the Australian Jockeys' Association, the Queensland Law Society, the Coalition for the Protection of Greyhounds and the Queensland Jockeys' Association. I give a shout-out to Mr Glen Prentice. I know he is a big fan of Queensland's racing calendar. I also mention Larry Cassidy. My dad was a mad keen

punter. I still remember his TAB phone account number—that is how mad keen he was. He always liked to back a Cassidy horse, so it was lovely to hear from Larry Cassidy. The Cassidy family are well-regarded in the industry, with his brother Jimmy also riding some pretty serious rides.

Issues that were raised throughout the process included: clarification of the definition of a 'racing decision' of the panel; appeals of decision of the panel to QCAT and the stay of those penalties; clarification of the nature of allowable appeals; the publication of the stewards' race day reports; and eligibility for appointment to the panel. These formed the basis for the recommendations that the committee made. Every submitter to this inquiry was fully supportive of the bill and its objectives to make sure we maintain integrity within the system and improve processes in that way.

The committee's recommendation 1 was to pass the bill. Recommendation 2 was seeking clarification on the definition of 'a racing decision', so I thank the minister for her clarification in the second reading speech on the stewards' roles and the powers they are able to exercise.

Recommendation 3 was in regards to clarifying the meaning of 'extent'. Again, the minister clarified that in her second reading speech that referred to the size of the penalty with no re-examination.

Recommendation 4 was again clarifying the publication of stewards' reports. We heard from a number of people around the use of stewards' reports and what they can be used for. There are multiple uses of those reports, but there is an impact in terms of the Human Rights Act, so I think a really good balance has been struck in terms of what we publish when it comes to those stewards' reports and being able to access information and sharing arrangements that have been put in place.

Recommendation 5 was in regards to the eligibility of appointment to the panel. I think the minister said it very well that there is an absolutely detailed suitability criteria that will be applicable to those panel members and to the chair's appointment. Obviously it will be impartial and independent, so that appointment process will be absolutely thorough to ensure we maintain integrity in our racing industry. I thank the minister for being able to clarify those issues that we identified in our report.

This is really good, sensible legislation. It continues the Palaszczuk government's investment in Queensland racing and making sure we have one of the best racing calendars in the country. I think Glenn Prentice is on record saying that jockeys love racing here in Queensland. On behalf of the committee, I thank them again for their contribution. This is a really good, sensible piece of legislation that will improve racing integrity in Queensland. I commend this bill to the House.