




Speech By
Kim Richards

MEMBER FOR REDLANDS

Record of Proceedings, 26 October 2022

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Ms RICHARDS** (Redlands—ALP) (7.20 pm): Wasn't that quite the show for the chamber tonight from the member for Kawana. Well done. Goodness gracious me. Maybe the member for Kawana has forgotten that we are the government that has introduced some of the strictest donation and expenditure laws in the country—short-term memory, my friend. There was talk of schemes, of channelling and funnelling money, of transparency, accountability and integrity, and of knowing what you stand for.

Before I table a document on NPAQ, I go back to that fake outrage from the other side that they stand for workers and I remind them of their track record. The member for Kawana's track record in industrial relations speaks for itself. He cannot rewrite that history from when they were in government, with 14,000 workers who were sacked, not to mention the nurses who were sacked. That is insane. Their track record included wage freezes, the introduction of laws to stop the democratic right of unions to campaign on political issues, voting against labour hire laws, voting against paid domestic and family violence leave and voting against industrial manslaughter laws. They have no credibility when it comes to standing up for the workers of Queensland—no credibility whatsoever.

I go back to talking about schemes and funnelling and channelling. When people join a registered industrial organisation, they need to know that it is transparent, accountable, it has information that can be found, it is registered and there is a rigorous process. Let us have a look at the structure of NPAQ, and it might have changed. Greater minds than mine have put this together because people could not possibly have any idea what they had signed up to.

It says that NPAQ is part of QNurses First Inc. and there are other notable business names which include the Midwifery Professional Association of Australia, the Nurses' Professional Association of Australia, the Nurses' Professional Association of New South Wales and the Nurses' Professional Association of Queensland. There are over a dozen operational entities that are all interrelated. It is absolutely incredible to see NPAQ and those groups and the shareholder structure. For the benefit of the House, that was my attempt to try to unscramble an egg and understand it. I table that diagram for the benefit of the House and the member for Kawana so we can try to get to the bottom of what it all looks like when it comes together. It is really quite incredible.

Tabled paper: Organisational chart titled 'QAS Group and NPAA Services Organisational Chart as at 2 November 2021' [1761](#).

The member for Kawana spoke about fees. Mr McGuire actually had to take on notice a number of questions, and one of them was the fee structure for the services that RUSH provides to its members. I asked him, 'When you look at that diagram and you see all of those organisations, you would think you would know if you were the treasurer of an entity. You would think you would be able to answer pretty quickly what position you had.' Unfortunately, on the day, Mr McGuire had to take that question on notice and come back to us with which unions he was secretary or treasurer of. He came back to us to let us know that he is the treasurer of the IWUA, which I understand holds the notable business names that include the Independent Workers Union of Australia, the Council of Independent Unions and the Independent Council of Unions.

He is the treasurer of the HS First Inc. trading as SOPPA, which I understand holds the notable business names that include the Sworn Officers' Professional Association of Queensland, the Sworn Officers' Professional Association of Australia, IPUQ, IPAUS and the Midwifery Professional Association of Queensland. There are so many acronyms; it is mind-boggling. He is the treasurer of CWEA Inc. trading as AMPS, which I understand also holds the notable business names of Australian Medical Professionals' Society, Care and Disability Workers Professional Association of Queensland and of Australia, Care and Disability Workers Union, Disability Workers Union, CWUA and the CADPAA. There is a lot of information!

Hopefully everybody has had a chance to look at the NPAQ website because it is pretty interesting. If you want to view their constitution, you have to go into their office. On the website it says you have to go down to the Emporium in the Valley to view their constitution in full. On the ASIC website though, NPAQ has their principal place of business listed as 9/27 Evans Street, Maroochydore. Go figure! I am not sure they know where they are housed. On that chart, I think they have associated entities that are within the *Courier-Mail* building at 41 Campbell Street. It is an interesting amount of information. I do not know if anybody would know what they were signing up to with their NPAQ membership. When you look at all of that information, you would have to be concerned. To think that the treasurer of those entities did not even know whether he was the treasurer or not—seriously! We have to wonder about transparency, accountability and integrity.

In the QPU submission, they noted that the restriction of the freedom of association and general protections to members of registered organisations is fair and effective and strikes a good balance between ensuring that organisations have the rights and accountabilities under the legislation and that employees in the system are able to achieve fair and effective representation and the right to freedom of association free from employer or other external influences. The NPAQ website is misleading. They are misleading their members because they cannot perform the services they are saying they can on their website. That is absolutely misleading. We talk again about transparency and integrity and the services they know they can legally provide, and they are misleading their members.

Mr Smith: Honest Queenslanders.

Ms RICHARDS: Yes, honest Queenslanders! One of the other interesting submissions to the committee was from Justice Peter Davis, the President of the Industrial Court of Queensland. During our inquiry, he provided us with some correspondence. He outlined his concerns with regards to unscrupulous agents who are charging fees to provide representation in the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission and the Industrial Court. His commentary formed the basis of our second recommendation within the report, and I am pleased to see the minister has been able to investigate the approaches available to us and is including those in the amendments to be moved in consideration in detail. I also add that the Queensland Law Society backed in the comments made by Justice Davis in support of the changes that this legislation will make.

Sexual harassment is a really important component of this bill. It builds on the work of the federal Sex Discrimination Commissioner, Kate Jenkins, and the national *Respect@work* report. That report shone a spotlight on the prevalence of sexual harassment in workplaces across the country. I am absolutely proud to be part of a Palaszczuk government that is committed to doing all we can to prevent and address sexual harassment in the workplace.

In terms of minimum employment standards, this legislation seeks to align with the national employment standards in the Fair Work Act 2009. The other important piece, which the minister touched on, is parental leave. The bill removes gendered divisions of parental care. We believe individual parents should decide how to allocate childcare responsibilities to best fit their family's circumstances. In a modern, contemporary society, I think that is entirely appropriate. The amendments will ensure Queensland families can make their own decisions.

The bill also supports parents, or those with responsibility for caring for children, who are returning to work by allowing them to apply to their employer to change their work from a full-time to a part-time basis. I know from experience back in the day in architecture that when mums left full-time work to take maternity leave it was so hard for them to return to work. This is important for our Queensland workplaces. The amendments to domestic and family violence leave will align Queensland with federal legislation.

In regards to the courier drivers, I noted the member for Kawana only wanted to talk about the companies being Menulog, Uber Eats and Deliveroo, but I wonder how many drivers he actually spoke to in terms of the conditions under which they operate. That is a really good piece of legislation. It has been modelled on the legislation in New South Wales which has been operating for more than 40 years. It is a really good piece of legislation.

In conclusion, I thank the committee, the secretariat, submitters, witnesses and the department for their involvement in our inquiry process. I commend this bill to the House.