




Speech By
Mark Boothman

MEMBER FOR THEODORE

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INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr BOOTHMAN** (Theodore—LNP) (11.37 am), continuing: That certainly is quite a list! Last night I was talking about the importance of giving people choice. We would not be in this situation if the Red Union was giving resources to the Labor Party. If it was receiving resources, we would not be debating this legislation. I say to the Red Union: if you were negotiating with those opposite, they would be more than happy to get resources and funds. If they did, we would not be debating this legislation. But the Red Union want to do the honourable thing and have no political alignment whatsoever. They just want to represent their members and be a strong advocate for their members.

One example is the Queensland Nurses and Midwives' Union and the NPA. The NPA has seen an extensive increase in membership. That just shows that these organisations that are not politically aligned are proving popular—so popular, in fact, that it is worrying those opposite in terms of the money and resources coming into their campaigns. That is all this is about. There are parts of this legislation that have merit—

Mr Mickelberg interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Pause the clock. Member for Buderim, you are on a warning. You can leave the chamber for one hour.

Whereupon the honourable member for Buderim withdrew from the chamber at 11.39 am.

Mr BOOTHMAN: There are parts of this legislation that do have merit such as strengthening laws when it comes to sexual harassment in the workplace. It is a shame that the government could not put these types of legislative changes in other bills and not tie them to this bill, because that certainly does have merit. As I said, there are certain aspects which should certainly be put forward. However, when those aspects are tied to a bill that destroys the rights of the worker to choose, then that is wrong.

We keep on talking about individualism. We keep on talking about the rights of people to choose. I remember back when Peter Beattie decided to deregulate the retail market for energy because he said that people needed to choose which energy provider they wanted—give choice. Why can the Labor Party not accept that there should be choice when it comes to industrial advocates for these professional associations? Why can it not accept that? It all comes down to money and resources.

Those opposite will rub their hands together with glee and excitement knowing that they are going to benefit in the long run if they can get rid of these organisations because it will force workers to go to a Labor aligned union for the protection of their right works. I have no qualms with unions whatsoever. However, I believe that there should be the ability to have competition in the marketplace. That is a fundamental belief, and there should be competition when it comes to this issue.

This bill also refers to delivery drivers. One issue that many of my local restaurants and cafes expressed to me was their concerns that these changes would have a direct impact on their profitability in terms of their ability to deliver their food services. If there is a limited number of delivery drivers, that will have direct repercussions on the ability of those cafes and restaurants at peak times to get food

delivered. Therefore, that will have a direct impact because if people think that their food will be delayed—they could get it in 40 minutes—then they will not be happy and they will never use that service again. It is those local tourism cafes on the Gold Coast and the Sunshine Coast and Cairns that will be directly affected.

We need to tread carefully here. Before the election the Albanese government said that it was going to look into this matter. Why can we not wait for a national approach for this matter? Why are we going it alone and directly impacting our local small businesses—the cafes that we love to go and see which make good money from these delivery services, which employ young people in our areas and give those people their first jobs? But no. We are potentially going to directly impact them and their profitability. During the pandemic a lot of my local cafes relied heavily on these delivery services to survive and this legislation is just going to kick them in the guts. We should be ashamed of that. We should all be ashamed of that and those opposite should certainly be ashamed of that.

They should reconsider this position. Give those workers in the nursing professions and the teaching professions a choice. Whatever those opposite do, do not kick our hospitality industry in the guts any further because interest rates are rising and the economy will start slowing, as the federal Treasurer has outlined, and that will have direct ramifications on the ability of our local cafes to employ young people in our local areas. This bill is a bridge too far and I ask all members to vote it down.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Before I call the next speaker, member for Theodore, you used unparliamentary language. I would ask you to withdraw.

Mr BOOTHMAN: I withdraw.