



Speech By  
**Patrick Weir**

**MEMBER FOR CONDAMINE**

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Record of Proceedings, 27 October 2022

## **INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mr WEIR** (Condamine—LNP) (12.32 pm): I rise to make a brief contribution to the debate on the Industrial Relations and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. The Industrial Relations and Other Legislation Amendment Bill was introduced into the Legislative Assembly and referred to the committee on 23 June 2022. The committee received 35 submissions.

As set out in the explanatory notes, the bill's primary objective is to give effect to the Queensland government's response to the recommendations of the so-called independent *Five-year review of Queensland's Industrial Relations Act 2016: final report*. The first thing to note about this report is it was conducted by the former Labor Party government attorney-general Linda Lavarch, so not only do we have a review being conducted by someone with an obvious bias but, unlike the committee process, any submitters to the formation of this bill were by invitation only. This is how this Palaszczuk government formulates policy: selected submitters or have participants sign a confidentiality agreement. This would appear to be becoming a common trait with this government.

Whilst there are some aspects of this bill that are able to be supported, the attack on a worker's choice of industrial representation is simply outrageous. We have just heard the member for Bundamba talk about different pieces of legislation which he alleges the LNP opposed. The sexual harassment section of this bill is fully supported. The record will show that we voted against this bill, but that part of this bill is fully supported. Sexual harassment has no place in the workplace. I see there are schoolchildren in the gallery above us here, including young girls, and we want them to be respected in the workplace. We support this section of the bill but, as stated by the shadow minister, we will be opposing this bill because of its attack on a worker's right to choose who represents them.

This legislation is specifically targeted to remove the ability of non-ALP aligned employee organisations—or the red unions, as they are called—to represent workers in industrial relations matters. This is a direct attack on the right of workers to have a choice in who represents them. That is a right that every Australian should have and it should not be taken away by this chamber.

The bill is an attack on democracy. It seeks to outlaw the red unions that do not support the ALP either financially or otherwise. The government justifies their actions by saying it is the recommendation of an independent five-year review. As I stated earlier, it is hard to put much credence in a review that was co-chaired by a former attorney-general and member of the Labor government, Linda Lavarch, and co-chaired by John Thompson, who was general secretary of the Queensland Council of Unions. When you have these two as co-chairs, what do you think the result is going to be? Exactly what we are presented with: an attack on anybody who is not part of a union that supports this government. As I stated, the original review did not provide an opportunity for public submissions, which means that any consultation was limited to registered unions and other entities that would support the review's predetermined outcomes.

This is not the first time we have seen legislation like this come into the House. In my time here we have seen a number of these pieces of legislation that support the encouragement of union participation. We saw the union encouragement legislation come into this House. When the Deputy

Premier of this state, Dr Steven Miles, has a doctorate in union encouragement, what sort of legislation do you think is going to come into this House? We have large amounts of money pouring into the Labor Party to be used on their campaigns. We saw the CFMEU make a significant donation and recently we saw them storm 1 William Street. The Premier will not give up that donation. The federal government is talking about excluding the CFMEU from discussions on industrial awards at the federal level, so the federal government has recognised this is a union that is out of control but this Palaszczuk government has not.

Donation laws were another thing we saw come in here. They were aimed at this side of the House only. They did not have any impact on unions. Unions can contribute to their heart's content. It was against donors that would support this side of the House. We went to compulsory preferential voting. That was changed with 17 minutes notice in this House because the government saw it as an advantage to themselves to get Greens preferences to get their members across the line. There is no way this government cannot say they are completely conflicted with this legislation. Every one of them owes their seat to a union in some fashion, shape or form. If they want to stand for parliament they have to have the support of a union to get preselected. If they want to raise money to win a seat in this place they need to get money from a union to do it. If they want to sit in those seats over there, the unions decide who will take their place in those chairs after an election has been won. The unions control this party lock, stock and barrel. This parliament has become a plaything for this government. Pieces of legislation like this, which are for the distinct benefit of the Labor Party and its members, is a disgrace. That is why we will be opposing this bill.