




Speech By
Shane Knuth

MEMBER FOR HILL

Record of Proceedings, 23 February 2022

HEALTH AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr KNUTH** (Hill—KAP) (6.13 pm): I rise to give my contribution to the Health and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2021. Before I start, I would like to point out that again we are presented with an omnibus bill that lumps together a number of acts. This is disappointing. This type of bill denies members their due right to debate each change to an act individually and vote on their merits. For example, I fully support some amendments under this bill but not others, yet I am expected to vote either yes or no en bloc on these issues under one bill.

The amendments to the Ambulance Service Act to remove the requirements for the QAS Commissioner to be no older than 65 years of age is good news. This gives the QAS the ability to retain valuable knowledge and experience of members in our community who still offer a lot. They are out there at all hours of the day and night and they do a valuable job.

The amendments to the Termination of Pregnancy Act 2018 and the Criminal Code Act 1899 allow students registered under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law who have undertaken a clinical placement with a health service to assist in a termination of pregnancy. It is no secret about my position and that of my fellow KAP members on abortion. I am completely against these changes. Under these changes there are serious questions about whether assisting with abortions will be compulsory for students to finish their clinical placements.

We are aware that other members have raised this today, but the committee has recommended that the minister outline in the second reading speech that students of medicine or other health studies will not be forced to participate in pregnancy termination. The recommendation went further to state that the level of detail in the explanatory notes and statement of compatibility about this part of the bill could lead one to question the nature of 'assistance' expected of students, acknowledging that a mechanism for a conscientious objection is in place. Despite the government stating that they had checks and balances in place when the abortion bill was passed in this parliament, here we see the start of the watering down process. I wanted to bring that to the attention of the House.