




Speech By
Hon. Shannon Fentiman

MEMBER FOR WATERFORD

Record of Proceedings, 23 February 2022

MOTION

Office of the Integrity Commissioner

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (5.05 pm): I move the following amendment—

That all words after 'notes' be omitted and the following inserted:

1. matters pertaining to the Office of the Integrity Commissioner have been referred to the Economics and Governance Committee and the Crime and Corruption Commission for their consideration and/or oversight;
2. the convention and standing orders to allow parliamentary committees to undertake their work without interference; and
3. the importance to uphold the Fitzgerald principles and doctrine of separation of powers under the Westminster system in Queensland.

The amendment to the motion reflects the respect that this House rightly has for our parliamentary committees and the committee process. We on this side of the House respect the vital work that our committees do in ensuring government integrity and accountability, but clearly those opposite do not. We understand that it is not the place of this chamber, or any member in it, to interfere with the operation of committee business and investigations. Those opposite do not. We understand that good government means having independent checks and balances. Those opposite do not.

The motion the member for Maroochydore has moved today demonstrates a complete disregard for proper parliamentary process and procedure. The modern parliamentary committee system that we have in Queensland today is a direct result of the Fitzgerald reforms of three decades ago. To overstep the mark, like those opposite would have us do, is a slap in the face of the integrity of the Fitzgerald reforms and is a slap in the face of a committee that your own members are on.

Mr Lister interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: The member for Southern Downs will not interject directly to any member.

Ms FENTIMAN: As much as I am sure some of those opposite would like to, we on this side of the House refuse to go back to the days of Joh Bjelke-Petersen. We refuse to water down our committees and stamp out their independence by commanding them to do our bidding. We refuse to discard the fundamental tenets of our democracy by ignoring the separation of powers. I know that the member for Kawana has a little bit of trouble with that one, but I am sure he will begin to grasp it eventually. Only Labor governments have stood up for integrity in Queensland.

I know I have said this a lot over the last few days, but let's again go through some of our reforms, particularly around donations: restored \$1,000 as the donation threshold after they made it \$12,000; implemented real-time disclosure of donations; banned property developer donations; and reintroduced electoral expenditure caps after those opposite abolished them. How did they vote on those important integrity reforms in this House? They voted against each and every one of them.

We should not be surprised, though; those opposite have a long history of trashing the committee process. Nobody who respects the work of our committees would come in here at midnight and sack the PCMC. No-one who respects our committees would do that. They would not have appointed and then repeatedly reappointed the chair of the Crime and Misconduct Commission without consulting the committee. They would not have tried to cut two weeks of estimates hearings to two days. Clearly, the LNP have absolutely no respect for our committee system, and the proof of that is the motion they moved. Two days for estimates! That would mean less time for the member for Kawana to reveal his failure to declare meetings with lobbyists. Time and time again the LNP have demonstrated they have no respect for parliamentary process and for our committee system.

Mr Lister interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: The member for Southern Downs is warned.

Ms FENTIMAN: It is not just committees they went to war with when in government. They went to war with the judges, the lawyers, the doctors, the teachers, the nurses and the firefighters. They would have gone to war with kindergartens had they had half a chance.

The matters that have been raised have been appropriately and properly referred to the Economics and Governance Committee and the CCC, so let's let them do their job. This is the correct course of action, it is the process that members are expected to follow and it is the process that we have properly followed. Again, this motion is nothing more than a cheap political stunt and it is just another opportunity to try to get some headlines, to get in front of the cameras.

The Leader of the Opposition continues to roll out his half rate shadow cabinet, but Queenslanders remember their record in government and we remember that the Leader of the Opposition stood with Campbell Newman.

(Time expired)