




Speech By  
**Andrew Powell**

**MEMBER FOR GLASS HOUSE**

---

Record of Proceedings, 24 August 2023

## **CHILD PROTECTION (OFFENDER REPORTING AND OFFENDER PROHIBITION ORDER) AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (11.41 am): I rise to address what we thought was the Child Protection (Offender Reporting and Offender Prohibition Order) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. What we have seen in the last 24 hours by the Palaszczuk Labor government is utterly disgraceful. It is an affront to parliamentary democracy. It proves that the arrogance of this government, and the chaos and the crisis it is in, knows no end and has reached new levels. If members do not believe my words, I refer to what the Leader of the Opposition shared during question time. Ten years ago the Premier said—

This is an arrogant government that is out of touch and using its numbers to rush through laws without the due consideration of the committee process.

The Premier did not answer the question earlier this morning. Let's try it again now. What has changed in 10 years? Ten years ago it was endemic of an arrogant government—out of touch, using its numbers to rush through legislation and ignoring the parliamentary committee process. That is exactly what is happening here today. If members need reminding, I point out that the original bill—the bill that we thought we were debating—is 48 pages. The amendments circulated by the minister run to 57 pages. Contrary to what the Premier has said this morning, some of them are not simply technical. Some of them are considerable policy diversions from what this state has known—policy changes that require members of parliament elected by Queenslanders to scrutinise. That is exactly why we have a parliamentary committee system.

Let me be very clear: the LNP opposition supports the Child Protection (Offender Reporting and Offender Prohibition Order) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022 in its original form and will vote to support it. I will repeat that, because I want to be very clear: the LNP opposition supports the child protection bill in its original form and today we will support it at the second reading. The reason I need to be very clear about this is that the Premier has shown her true colours today. I readily suspect that Labor's underhanded and dirty political plan to cover up the utter destruction of the parliamentary committee process will be used against the opposition down the track, because we will need to stand up for this trashing of the parliament. We will need to take a stand against Labor's ghastly lack of integrity. We know that Labor will try to use that for political means.

We need to be clear that we differentiate between the original bill, the amendments moved by the minister and the integrity involved in trashing the parliamentary committee process. When we do, we know that Labor cannot be trusted. When we do, we know that members opposite will be so desperate that they will try to abuse the position we arrive at later this afternoon for their own political gain. It will become weaponised. It will become a political weapon that they use in the weeks and months ahead. In doing so, they are being utterly disingenuous.

We cannot sit by and allow this egregious breach of parliamentary process to go unchecked. The position we will take is on behalf of Queenslanders who believe in integrity, who believe that bills should be scrutinised and particularly who believe that they should have a right to challenge the policy changes that are being put forward in the amendments foreshadowed by the minister.

There is an opportunity rarely used but which we need to use because of this egregious breach. It cannot go unchecked and it cannot go through with our assent. I move the following amendment—

That the question be amended by omitting the words 'now be read a second time' and the following words inserted:

'and all government circulated amendments be referred back to the Community Support and Services Committee for full and proper examination of the bill and amendments, and report back to the House no earlier than 6 October 2023 so as to ensure compliance and adherence to the spirit of section 26B of the Constitution Act 2001.'

Let me speak to the motion I have moved. I have made passing reference to the amendments the minister has moved. Let me unpack some of what they involve. We have: removing proposed requirements for a reportable offender to provide MAC addresses—fine; clarifying the term 'sexual offence against any person'—technical perhaps; clarifying service options for police banning notices—again, potentially technical; and validation of QPS discipline decisions—we have some concerns about this. There is a retrospectivity applied to this that potentially involves 480 disciplinary matters. It may be technical in nature but it has far-reaching ramifications.

We then have the decriminalisation of offences of public intoxication and begging. Queensland is the only state not to have made this change—fine. The Gold Coast may have the highest number of people charged with public intoxication and the parliamentary inquiry into decriminalising these offences has made a number of recommendations, but we have had no assurance that any of this work has been done. The minister must answer why he has felt it necessary to bring this forward now. I know that my colleague the shadow Attorney-General will be addressing this further and addressing our position on it.

Through the foreshadowed amendments we will be removing the offence of public urination. Again, this will have significant flow-on effects. We will also be repealing sex work-specific police powers. Why are we rushing this amendment through? We know that the government has given certain commitments around this. Where is the legislation? Why can that not go to a committee? Why can a committee not consider that as it should? I go on. We heard during question time about the significant changes around the Youth Justice Act and the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act regarding watch houses and the overriding of the Human Rights Act. Again, the shadow Attorney-General will unpack our position on that.

We have amendments to the Mineral Resources Act that concern the town of Glenden. My wife grew up in Glenden. I know it is important to resolve the matter. We understood the Premier had given a commitment to bring legislation forward. We were open to that legislation being brought forward, but we anticipated that it would have been introduced this week and sent off to a committee for consideration to make sure we had it right. My colleague the shadow minister for mines will be addressing that issue.

There are also amendments to the Mental Health Act and the Supreme Court of Queensland Act. When we look at all of those amendments—30 in total; 57 pages of them—we must ensure that the motion I have just moved is agreed to by the House. This legislation must go back to the Community Support and Services Committee for their consideration of not only the bill as it previously stood but also, more importantly, these amendments. We need to give them the time to do the proper consultation that our parliamentary committee process has been established to do.

Today we are seeing the Palaszczuk Labor government trashing our parliamentary committee process. More than that, they are trashing Westminster tradition. They are trashing it because they have given up listening to Queenslanders. They have given up making sure that legislation reflects the needs of Queenslanders. They do not meet with Queenslanders. They do ensure that Queenslanders have an opportunity to have input when amendments like these are brought forward. They have decided they do not need parliament anymore and they do not need the parliamentary committee process anymore. As I said when I started my contribution, in the Premier's own words—

... an arrogant government that is out of touch and using its numbers to rush through laws without the due consideration of the committee process.

They are not my words; they are the Premier's words 10 years ago.

This cannot happen without being commented on. This must be addressed. I call on all members of this House of all political persuasions to join with me in voting for the motion I have just moved.