




Speech By  
**Andrew Powell**

**MEMBER FOR GLASS HOUSE**

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## **EMBLEMS OF QUEENSLAND AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (4.58 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the Emblems of Queensland and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. Like many in the chamber who were born in the seventies and raised in Brisbane, it will be a cool day when we pass a piece of legislation that enshrines as an emblem of Queensland the *Muttaburrasaurus langdoni*. A favourite memory of mine as a kid was visiting the Old Museum over near the Royal Brisbane hospital. When we were living away from Brisbane, the highlight was visiting my grandmother, who lived in Brighton in the minister's electorate, jumping on the train at Shorncliffe and catching it into Fortitude Valley, then jumping on what I thought was a tram—I am told the tram track was ripped up long before that so it must have been a bus that looked like a tram—and up the hill we went to the Old Museum and out we got, to be confronted by *Tyrannosaurus rex* and a few other dinosaurs.

**A government member** interjected.

**Mr POWELL:** The metro and the tram will be similarly unfamiliar for the current generation. That is certainly one of my favourite memories from childhood. To be part of a legislature that is now bringing in a state emblem that is a dinosaur, and a dinosaur that is one of our own, is a very cool thing. As others have said, when we get home we will all have a lot of fun telling our children or our grandchildren, when they come along in the future, all about it.

As Manager of Opposition Business, I want to focus on a number of the other amendments that this legislation will bring into effect. As others have said, they are largely technical in nature and are being made to the Crime and Corruption Act, the Parliamentary Service Act and the Parliament of Queensland Act. In the case of the Crime and Corruption Act, the bill will retrospectively clarify that since 23 April 1998, which is almost the time when I was visiting the old museum, members of the Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Committee and its predecessor committees have been able to participate in their meetings in person or by telephone, video or other electronic means.

The changes to the Parliament of Queensland Act refine the process by which a member of the Legislative Assembly in a state of ill health has their request for a proxy vote notified to the Assembly. Similar to the Crime and Corruption Act amendments, the bill will amend the Parliament of Queensland Act to retrospectively clarify that, since 23 April 1998, members of parliamentary committees have been able to participate in committee meetings in person or by telephone, video or other electronic means and to update a number of cross-references in the act to definitions that are explained and provided for in the Electoral Act 1992.

Amendments to the Parliamentary Service Act clarify that the parliamentary precinct includes the Legislative Assembly chamber and its galleries when the Legislative Assembly is sitting and provide that the Speaker is to prepare the human rights certificate and explanatory notes for by-laws and rules made by the Speaker under the Parliamentary Service Act. The bill also amends the Parliamentary Service Act to provide that in a proceeding for an offence related to a person's behaviour on the parliamentary precinct a direction made or purportedly made by the Speaker or a person authorised to

make such directions during proceedings in the Legislative Assembly can be given as evidence in a court of law. I want to spend a little bit of time speaking about this amendment. There is a slight concern amongst some members that, whilst we really want to respect and continue to enshrine parliamentary privilege, we need to ensure that we get these amendments right. Therefore, I want to unpack that amendment a little further.

Clause 8 of the Emblems of Queensland and Other Legislation Amendment Bill seeks to amend section 4, Definition, of the Parliamentary Service Act 1988 to amend the definition of 'parliamentary precinct' by omitting the following words 'but does not include the Legislative Assembly chamber, or the galleries of the House, whilst the Legislative Assembly is in session'. As the explanatory notes to the clause provide, this amendment will ensure that the Legislative Assembly chamber and its galleries are considered to be part of the parliamentary precinct for the purposes of the Parliamentary Service Act when the Legislative Assembly is sitting. This will ensure by-laws by the Speaker, under section 50 of the Parliamentary Service Act 1988, will be able to be applied to persons in the Legislative Assembly chamber and its gallery when the Assembly is sitting. However, I note that section 50(7) provides directions given under that section do not apply to members of the Legislative Assembly in the conduct of their parliamentary business. That is the important point to make here. In no way is this impinging on parliamentary privilege as it applies to members of the Assembly when they are going about their parliamentary business.

This has come about because of some of the actions we have seen in the gallery in particular over recent years and the inability to necessarily provide evidence based on the Speaker's directions in those instances to proceedings that followed. Disturbing the Assembly has long been recognised as a contempt and the Speaker and/or the Legislative Assembly has powers under the standing orders, the Parliament of Queensland Act and the common law to deal with such contempt. We have received advice from the Clerk that including the chamber and the galleries in the definition in section 4 of the Parliamentary Service Act 1988 will allow the Speaker to apply the by-laws to persons in the Legislative Assembly chamber and its galleries, but will in no way diminish the existing powers of the Speaker or the Assembly to deal with contempt under the Parliament of Queensland Act, the standing orders or the general contempt powers of the House.

I note that sounds very technical. I do not know if the minister had concerns raised on his side of the House, but a number of our members certainly want to make sure that we protect the long-held tradition of parliamentary privilege. These changes are more about behaviour in the gallery and behaviour by non-members. Certainly, this will not impact on members of the Legislative Assembly as they go about their parliamentary business.

With that, I return to what others have focused on and, indeed, what the bill focuses on, which is our friend the dinosaur. When I go home this afternoon or tomorrow morning, as I said, I am going to have a lot of fun catching up with my kids and telling them that we have a brand new emblem in the state of Queensland and it is the *Muttaburrasaurus langdoni*.