




Speech By
Bryson Head

MEMBER FOR CALLIDE

Record of Proceedings, 14 June 2023

BIRTHS, DEATHS AND MARRIAGES REGISTRATION BILL

 **Mr HEAD** (Callide—LNP) (4.47 pm): The LNP wants to see a Queensland with individual responsibility and where people have the liberty to make decisions for themselves. At the same time, we do not want to see a Queensland that sees the rights of parents to care for and to raise their children taken away from them. We also do not want to see a Queensland where the rights of one demographic are above the rights of another.

Labor talk a lot about their record of consultation, but this bill was crammed into the Christmas period when people are enjoying time away and are rarely paying attention to politics. In this very short consultation time the committee received 385 submissions. That shows that there was a lot of community interest, but I fear many Queenslanders did not have the opportunity to share their thoughts on this legislation. Supporters of this bill also made comment as to the lack of consultation. The Queensland Law Society stressed this in their own comments—

The reforms proposed in the Bill are significant and will have wide-ranging implications for Queenslanders. It is in all our best interests to ensure proposed laws work as effectively and as efficiently as possible, and this requires meaningful and robust consultation with stakeholders. Short consultations held during the Christmas and New Year shut down period will not yield the best legislation for the people of Queensland.

Of the submissions published, 159 were supportive of the bill, 181 were not supportive of the bill and one was unclear. Some components of this bill address genuine issues and it would have been great if, for once, this Labor government had actually focussed on doing good for Queensland without throwing in clearly divisive and politically motivated agendas.

I encourage Queenslanders to listen to the speech of the member for Kawana if they want to know how Labor have been ignoring women's rights groups in their progression of this bill as it is currently written. Not only are women's rights being ignored; parental rights are being thrown out the window and, in turn, the rights of children are being ignored. I come from an electorate where the government treats women as second-class citizens so I am always wary of policies that will further strip away the rights of women. Of course, I am referring to the fact that in my electorate there are 14 hospitals and not one maternity ward.

This morning a tweet from JK Rowling highlighted the fact that John Hopkins University has removed 'woman' from the definition of 'lesbian'. The university definition reads—

A non-man attracted to non-men. While past definitions refer to 'lesbian' as a woman ...

In changing the definition they have literally removed the word 'woman'. It is no wonder that Labor have not bothered delivering a birthing service in Callide for the last year when it seems they do not even know what a woman is.

Young people with gender dysphoria can often have complex mental health issues and, therefore, an application to change their sex descriptor must involve a significantly more rigorous process than that proposed by this bill. Clause 39 provides that a young person aged 16 or more may apply to the registrar to alter the record of their sex merely by making a declaration that they identify as

the sex stated in the application and live or seek to live as a person identified by that sex. That statement needs to be accompanied only by a supporting statement by a person who is at least 18-years-old, has known the applicant for at least 12 months, believes the application is made in good faith and supports the application. The supporting person needs no qualifications whatsoever. Indeed, it could be a school friend as long as they are aged 18 or over. Given the likely social and emotional issues being experienced by the applicant, that is a woefully inadequate process with which to allow a person aged 16 or 17 years to change their sex descriptor.

For children aged under 16 there are broadly two pathways to changing a sex descriptor. First, the administrative pathway under clause 40 allows the parents or parent of a child under the age of 16 to apply to the registrar to alter the child's sex descriptor. Persons identified in schedule 1 may also apply on the child's behalf. Secondly, the court pathway allows a child aged between 12 and 16 years to apply to the Childrens Court for a court order directing the registrar to alter the record of the child's sex if they do not have parental consent or for one parent, or other eligible person, in relation to a child aged under 16 to apply to the Childrens Court for the relevant order.

For all those aged under 16, under clause 37, the key to both pathways is an assessment of the child by a developmentally informed practitioner who has a professional relationship with the child. Remarkably, a developmentally informed practitioner includes not just psychiatrists, psychologists and psychotherapists but also a number of persons who may have no demonstrated experience or expertise in these matters such as occupational therapists, speech pathologists, nurses, social workers or school guidance counsellors. These clauses clearly strip away the rights of parents, which is of great concern.

I would like to note a few key lines from a very well written newspaper article that was published recently. The article is titled 'We have lost our child to this insidious ideology'. The article begins—

It was a sunny weekend afternoon four years ago when Elizabeth discovered her 13-year-old daughter was binding her developing breasts with packing tape.

There is a bit more to it, but I wish to quote this part—

But Jack's mother was in no doubt she was not faced with a child who believed she was truly a boy, but with a girl who was desperate to hold back the march of puberty, her visceral disgust at developing womanhood taking place amid a peer backdrop of hypersexualised young teenagers obsessed with gender identity, increasingly exposed to pornography and immersed in online trans culture.

The article further states—

'I always felt like an outsider,' says Jack, who like a sizeable proportion of children being treated at gender clinics around the country, is on the autism spectrum.

Jack said that he knew he thought differently. The article quotes Jack's mother, Elizabeth—

Elizabeth says she 'never saw in my child a child that was a boy or in any way male.'

...

'I saw a female child who was afraid of womanhood.'

It is no wonder that a young girl could be afraid of womanhood when a government fails to deliver key female services through maternity wards in a lot of rural Queensland. The same article tells Bethany's story. You could say that this was an experiment on children. The article states—

A few suburbs from where Elizabeth is doing her best to keep her family intact, another Melbourne mother receives a phone call from an unknown number.

The caller is a teacher, Louise, who is crouching at the back of a dark empty classroom, the door closed and the lights switched off.

'Anna, I got your email, do you have a moment?' Louise says when the mother answers the call.

Earlier that day Anna had sent an email to her 16-year-old daughter's school demanding an explanation as to why she was apparently being referred to at school by a boy's name and why no attempt had been made to discuss the issue with the parents.

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When Anna asked to discuss her child's social transition facilitated by the school, the principal ignored the email, and subsequent requests to discuss the issue. When Louise made the call to say she understood Anna's concerns, and indeed shared them, having become increasingly concerned at the way a growing youth trans subculture was 'tapping into an adult world of activism', concealment seemed essential.

'I was just terrified of being overheard,' Louise says.

Those are caring adults with genuine concerns for the welfare of children and they are scared to speak up. I table that article in full for people to consider.

Tabled paper: Article from *The Australian*, dated 26 May 2023, titled 'We have lost our child to this insidious ideology' [860](#).

I oppose this bill because of the grave concerns we hold for rights that are being stripped away and for the woke agenda that is being tied to what otherwise could be satisfactory legislation.