




Speech By
Fiona Simpson

MEMBER FOR MAROOCHYDORE

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MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Kaiser, Mr M

 **Ms SIMPSON** (Maroochydore—LNP) (2.26 pm): When Annastacia Palaszczuk became Premier she said that she would act with integrity and honesty. Her actions show that she has changed. There have been media reports that self-confessed electoral rorter and former Labor MP Mike Kaiser is being considered for appointment to the role of the Premier's director-general. This comes after the Palaszczuk government has already elevated Mike Kaiser to other senior director-general roles. Then premier Peter Beattie displayed higher standards than Premier Palaszczuk after damning evidence and findings were presented at the Shepherdson inquiry into electoral fraud. Peter Beattie said that he did not want people who break the law in the Labor Party. He said—

I don't care whether this goes back to 1917. If people are still alive and they have broken the law in these electoral matters, they should go to jail.

Premier Palaszczuk obviously does not agree with this high standard of integrity in relation to the electoral system. Let's look at what happened, as we should never forget. Integrity mattered then and it matters today.

The Shepherdson inquiry confirmed Mike Kaiser's role as an electoral rorter who at first denied falsifying enrolments but eventually resigned from parliament after evidence presented to the inquiry showed that he had. The inquiry also found a systemically corrupt culture of branch stacking, vote rigging and falsification of electoral enrolments within the Queensland branch of the Labor Party. Inquiry commissioner Tom Shepherdson QC determined that Mike Kaiser's conduct constituted the offence of making a false declaration under section 117 of the Queensland Electoral Act. Because this offence was statute barred and the time limit to prosecute had passed, he could not be prosecuted. Let's be clear: Mike Kaiser was adversely named, as were the practices in which he and other Labor MPs and identities indulged, in using false electoral enrolments. Anyone who downplays this as a minor issue or just a youthful indiscretion is making excuses for the serious business of electoral fraud—electoral fraud—which corrupts the integrity of the voting system.

The Premier and her government try to make out that 'there's nothing to see here and you shouldn't bring up the past of Mike Kaiser'—this damning past of a self-confessed electoral rorter—but those opposite cannot whitewash this history and say that it did not happen. They cannot say, 'Oh, we shouldn't talk about it because the rules of this parliament don't allow us to talk about it.' That is a dodgy interpretation if ever I have heard a dodgy interpretation about a dodgy history which we should be shouting from the rooftops. Peter Coaldrake said 'let the sunshine in' regarding his investigation into the culture of bullying of public servants and cover-ups by this Labor government. Premier Palaszczuk's actions are as good as saying, 'Let the vote rorters in.' When Labor says, 'Don't talk about it,' that shows that it is not sorry, it is not listening and it does not get it.

Integrity matters. It matters because it is about how and why the government makes decisions for Queenslanders, but is it making those decisions for Queenslanders or for itself? We have seen that it has a track record of governing for its mates, governing to keep its own political hide safe and not governing for the safety of Queenslanders. Integrity of government is about governing for Queenslanders first rather than your mates first, and the elevation of self-confessed vote rorter Mike Kaiser tells us more about the Premier than it does about Mike Kaiser. It tells us about her priorities, about how she is more interested in winning the next election than addressing the chaos in the way that her government has let Queenslanders down. This is a chaotic government in turmoil that keeps struggling to deal with Queensland's youth justice crisis, the health crisis and the housing crisis which are all of its making because it failed to act in a timely way and was looking after itself rather than Queenslanders. This government also has an integrity crisis. It is time for the Premier to rule out Mike Kaiser, self-confessed vote rorter, as her next DG. It is time to rule him out because electoral rorting is not an insignificant issue. It matters to Queenslanders.

(Time expired)