




Speech By
Fiona Simpson

MEMBER FOR MAROOCHYDORE

Record of Proceedings, 25 May 2023

PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Forensic and Scientific Services; Star Entertainment Group, Casino Licence

 **Ms SIMPSON** (Maroochydore—LNP) (2.19 pm): I rise to speak about reports that staff have had contracts terminated at the state's forensic laboratory. This was an inquiry the LNP opposition fought tooth and nail for. It was an inquiry that for months and months the Palaszczuk Labor government impeded. Palaszczuk government ministers Yvette D'Ath and Shannon Fentiman are yet to be held accountable for the DNA lab failings they oversaw and, unlike victims, have not paid any price for their refusal to take responsibility for this mess. Queenslanders want justice. Queenslanders deserve justice. Queenslanders want Palaszczuk ministers D'Ath and Fentiman to be held accountable for the DNA failures that happened on their watch.

Regarding Star Entertainment Group, the LNP is calling on Attorney-General Yvette D'Ath to be removed from deciding the future of the Star Entertainment Group's casino licence in Queensland. Attorney-General D'Ath's past dealings with the Star Entertainment Group cast doubt over her impartiality and whether she should make this multimillion dollar decision.

The facts and time line are clear. November 2015, Attorney-General Yvette D'Ath ignored formal department advice and signed off on increased poker machine numbers for Star, as part of the Queen's Wharf contract. Prior to the 2017 election, Star hosted an event for Yvette D'Ath to help raise political donations to the Labor Party. November 2019, Attorney-General Yvette D'Ath decided Star should be the monopoly casino operator on the Gold Coast. June 2020, Attorney-General Shannon Fentiman approved terms of reference for the Star inquiry, deliberately excluding examination of Minister D'Ath's actions as Attorney-General and interactions between the Palaszczuk government, Labor lobbyists, unions and Star. May 2023, Minister Yvette D'Ath returns as Attorney-General and will now decide whether Star should keep its casino licence.

Attorney-General Yvette D'Ath has politically benefited from fundraising events from Star while she was in charge of regulating casinos. Attorney-General Yvette D'Ath cannot be trusted to determine Star's suitability to hold a casino licence in Queensland. There can be absolutely no risk or appearance of impropriety or conflict of interest if appropriate actions are taken. These issues should be beyond doubt. That is why the Premier must ensure Yvette D'Ath plays no role in determining Star's suitability to hold a casino licence. Otherwise it will be more chaos, more crisis and a lack of integrity of this government.