




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR KAWANA

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BIRTHS, DEATHS AND MARRIAGES REGISTRATION BILL

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (2.57 pm): The Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Bill is an attack on women, it is an attack on women's rights and it is an attack on young girls. I note the Attorney-General who has carriage of this bill now was not the Attorney-General who introduced the bill. I am intrigued that the now Attorney-General who has carriage of the bill used to be the Attorney-General, and if it was such a priority of the government why did former attorney-general D'Ath not champion this reform when she was the attorney-general and she had the power to do it? Are we seeing the bill being debated today because the now Attorney-General is in the right faction of the Labor Party and attorney-general Fentiman was in the left faction of the Labor Party? If the Attorney-General who has carriage of it now had the courage of her convictions, why was this bill not introduced when she, for many years, was the attorney-general?

As I said, this bill is an attack on women, it is an attack on women's rights and it is an attack on children's rights in Queensland. There are two aspects of this bill that concern me the most and they are contained in part 2 and part 5. Addressing my concerns in relation to part 2, the committee report states—

To provide for an inclusive approach, the Bill proposes to retain the term 'mother' in the context of how a child's parent may be registered and uses the gender-neutral term 'birth parent' which refers to—

are you ready for this, Mr Deputy Speaker—

'the person, of any sex, who gave birth to the child'

Only one sex can give birth to a child, and that is a woman. They are being degraded in this bill by now being referred to as 'birth parent'. What happened to the old Labor Party that would defend and stand up for women? Where are the feminists in the Labor Party? Where are the Emily's List members of the Labor Party defending women and defending women's rights, which have been eroded? Where are the Labor Party women standing up and saying, 'No, we don't want to be called "birth parent". We want to be called "woman". We want to be called "mother".' This bill erodes that. I place on this record that the committee report states—

Some submitters raised concerns that the proposed parenting descriptors (being mother/father/parent) would reflect something other than biological parentage on the child's birth certificate. The Coalition of Activist Lesbians Inc commented that 'only biologically female people give birth to human babies'.

That is a scientific fact.

Part 5 of the bill is even more concerning. It is the new framework for acknowledgement of sex. It says essentially that once a year a person can go to the Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages and apply to change the record of sex as their identity on their birth certificate. As it says in the committee report, under the framework a person will be able to nominate a sex descriptor of their choice—male, female or any other descriptor of a sex such as trans, transman, transwoman, agender, genderqueer or non-binary. The registrar will be required to refuse the application if the descriptor nominated is a prohibited sex descriptor, and it goes through some of those. That can occur once every 12 months.

As it says in the committee report, the most extensive changes proposed in the bill occur in part 5, which is the part that concerns me the most. The report states that it includes 'provisions relating to the requirements for altering a record of sex on the relevant child register'. During the inquiry the committee received 385 submissions. Of those submissions, 338 commented on part 5 of the bill, with 151 for the proposed amendments and 187 against. Of the submissions received on part 5 of the bill, the majority were against this particular part of the bill.

I will go through some of the submissions but firstly I want to address the issue of women's sports, which is also being debated today. This is a huge issue internationally. Women have fought for the right to participate in sports that have been long regarded as men's sports. Women have fought for the right to have their sports and to play the same sports. Now, the women are fighting—guess who? Men, again! They are fighting men in sport. They have long fought for the right to participate at an equal level—along with their female counterparts, sporting counterparts and friends—and now we see, internationally, that men are competing in women's sports yet the Labor Party women are silent on that.

Mrs McMahon: Yep.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take that interjection. They are absolutely silent on it. Everything that the feminist movement fought for is being eroded by this bill. Men are now playing sport and competing against women and—guess what? The men are winning the competition!

Mrs McMahon: Where?

Mr BLEIJIE: The member for Macalister asks, 'Where?' I will get to that. I thank her because that is where I was going to go next in the debate. I will quote some Australian women sport stars. Raelene Boyle is an Australian track legend and three-time Olympic silver medallist. She says—

It's ridiculous. Of course they are going to be bigger and stronger. That's just the way it is. It doesn't matter how much oestrogen is taken. They still have higher levels of testosterone. It's difficult for people to train so hard—

Mrs D'ATH: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order under relevance. I ask that the member be brought back to the bill. If the member can find somewhere in the bill that talks about decisions around whether trans people can compete in a particular sport and what side they support—

Mr BLEIJIE: It's in the committee report.

Mrs D'ATH: In the bill.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Bush): Members, I will hear the point of order in silence. I will take some advice.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Kawana and members, I ask that there is no quarrelling while I consider my decision. Member for Kawana, if there is reference to sporting activities in the report then I will allow it. I would encourage you to come back to the other aspects of the bill and the report.

Mr BLEIJIE: My concern with part 5 of the bill, which relates to identity, is that when someone changes their birth certificate to identify as male they will be able to take that and participate in female sports. That is why the issue is raised in the committee report and it is why many members have spent so much time on it today. Raelene Boyle, Dawn Fraser, Emma McKeon, Emily Seebohm and Caitlyn Jenner—everyone knows Caitlyn Jenner—have opposed the idea that men can compete in women's sports. Caitlyn Jenner opposes that. You are then attacked, just as I am now being attacked by the member for Macalister, when people call you—

Government members interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: Because you talk about the rights of women they accuse you of being transphobic and all sorts of other insults. That is fine; people are used to it. This morning, JK Rowling tweeted that Johns Hopkins University has changed the definition of 'lesbian' to 'a non-man attracted to non-men'. Under the woke stuff we now see, a lesbian cannot even be properly defined as a 'woman' according to that university and institutions across the state.

In its submission, the Women's Forum Australia states—

We are a national organisation with supporters from across Australia ...

...

Like similar legislation passed in other jurisdictions ... sex as a legal concept would effectively be abolished with grave social, health, legal and other repercussions.

They go on to say that the legislation will have harmful implications for women and girls. Did the member read all of the submissions? There are hundreds of pages of submissions from women's groups—groups that usually the Labor Party would be quoting from. Usually they would be quoting from every feminist organisation and every women's organisation but, no, they are silent on all of the women's groups. They are completely dismissive of the women's groups. Not only are they dismissive of the women's groups; the women's groups say that former attorney-general Fentiman did not even give them the time of day and refused meetings with them to talk about women's rights and girls' rights.

The LGB Alliance are against it. The Coalition of Activist Lesbians Inc. are against it. The Feminist Legal Clinic are against this bill. International Women's Day Brisbane Meanjin are against it. FamilyVoice Australia are against it. The Women's Action Alliance Canberra are against the bill, as is the Australian Christian Lobby. On every group the Labor Party would generally come in here and quote from to support women and back women they are silent. The LNP will give women a voice. The LNP will give children a voice. We will protect women's and children's rights in the state of Queensland.