




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR MOUNT OMMANEY

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BIRTHS, DEATHS AND MARRIAGES REGISTRATION BILL

 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (3.28 pm): I rise to make a contribution in support of the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Bill today, and I am so very proud to do so. I begin by thanking both the current and former attorneys-general, the members for Redcliffe and Waterford, for their shared advocacy on this very important piece of reform. Both members have taken a clear and unequivocal position on this bill, supporting our trans and gender-diverse community. I am so proud to be part of the government that is backing this bill.

A birth certificate is a foundational document. It is a document we use all the time. For our trans community, it is at best deeply unpleasant to present this document and at worst shocking and upsetting. Members of this House know that this legislation will have a real and positive impact on members of our community. I want to share the story today, with her permission, of a brave young woman from my community who is here today and has been an unintentional advocate for this legislation simply through her lived experience.

My young constituent came to meet with me, along with her father, to let me know about her support for this bill because of the profound and positive impact that the passing of this legislation is going to have on her life. We had a long and broad ranging discussion on lots of things from how school was going to what sport she played in her spare time, but what stayed with me from everything that we spoke about that day was this: she said, 'Every time I show my birth certificate it feels like an unintentional outing.'

I have to say that I have probably handed over my birth certificate dozens of times in my life and I have honestly never thought about it before. I think that is in large part because my birth certificate matches my lived identity and experience. Every time this young woman has to enrol in a sport or enrol in school she has to hand that document over. She hates looking at it herself but, even worse, she does not necessarily get to choose the strangers who read this information.

I suspect the reason she feels this trepidation in sharing this document is that unfortunately not everyone has been kind about her transition. Like many trans youths, she has experienced bullying in her school and in her community and naturally she and her family are very cautious about who they share this information and the birth certificate with. That is why I have not shared her name or her age or her suburb because, sadly, some parts of our community still are not safe for young trans and gender-diverse kids. That is what we seek to change with this bill, slowly but surely.

This young lady is grace personified and has done a service whether she realises it or not, although I hope she does, to every Queenslanders who wants to have their identity documents match their lived experience. Can I recognise the trauma—because there is no other word for it—that comes from coming to your local member and pouring your heart out for an hour or more on an issue that matters to you more than anything and asking your local member to support that legislation. That takes incredible bravery, incredible guts and incredible grace. I only hope that this legislation honours her bravery and her grace in the way that she deserves. I am so proud to be her local member. I commend this bill to the House.