




Speech By
Jonty Bush

MEMBER FOR COOPER

Record of Proceedings, 11 May 2023

**MONITORING OF PLACES OF DETENTION (OPTIONAL PROTOCOL TO THE
CONVENTION AGAINST TORTURE) BILL**

 **Ms BUSH** (Cooper—ALP) (11.15 am), continuing: I rise to pick up where I left off last night on the monitoring of places of detention bill. As I was saying last night, I also want to acknowledge the work of Sisters Inside in advocating for women prisoners not only in Queensland but nationally. Sisters Inside have over 30 years experience in systemic and individual advocacy for female prisoners, which regrettably is one of the faster growing prison cohorts not just in Queensland but nationally. This is something that concerns me a lot and it is something that, based on conversations I have had with the Attorney-General, is also on our radar as a government.

During their verbal submission, Sisters Inside suggested to the committee that we ought to give further consideration to clause 19(6) of the bill relating to reprisal action, particularly the nuances of how reprisal action or even the threat of reprisal action against prisoners for speaking to advocates can manifest in female prisons. Again, I am pleased this has been given further consideration, and I support the Attorney-General's proposed amendments to clause 19(6) to expand the examples of detriment within the legislation. This expansion will include other forms of reprisals such as: injury, damage or loss; an onerous change to the conditions of a person's detention; intimidation or harassment; or to do any act that is, or is likely to be, to the detriment of the person. This amendment does not change the substance of the reprisal provisions but provides greater guidance to what could be a detriment to another person, particularly within a detention setting.

The progress of the bill today represents an important step in Queensland's commitment to work in good faith towards implementing OPCAT here in Queensland. Along with the Inspector of Detention Services Act 2022 passed earlier this year, it demonstrates our ongoing commitment to human rights and ensures that fair and equitable treatment of individuals in places of detention is upheld. I commend the bill to the House.