




Speech By  
**Lance McCallum**

**MEMBER FOR BUNDAMBA**

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### **BIRTHS, DEATHS AND MARRIAGES REGISTRATION BILL**

 **Mr McCALLUM** (Bundamba—ALP) (2.10 pm): At its core, this bill is about two things: firstly, it is about ensuring that Queensland's registration services remain relevant, responsive and contemporary by modernising its practices; and secondly, it is about allowing our registration services here in our great state to better recognise our diverse community and to make sure that our registration services are promoting diversity and equality.

On the issue of modernising, since 2004 when the current bill was enacted, a lot has changed. Over that time we have had significant operational changes at the registry such as increased online applications, along with an increased need for appropriate data use, protection and the prevention of identity theft and fraud. This bill will result in improvements in the operation of the registry, increased fraud prevention and clarify the information collection, use and sharing powers of the registrar. This is important stuff when you consider the import of the register.

Turning to the second aim of this bill and the part of the bill that has attracted most of the debate that we are seeing in this chamber today, which is around allowing our registration services to better recognise our diverse community, particularly as it relates to trans and gender-diverse members of our community. I represent a community in Bundamba that is incredibly diverse. It is an incredibly tolerant community. Our diversity is one of our greatest strengths. We need to ensure that as community representatives we are taking action to back up our commitment to promoting diversity and inclusion in our local communities. It is through reforms such as the ones that are contained in this bill that we can take those words and turn them into actions that will actually drive real change.

Trans and gender-diverse people, under the reforms in this bill, will no longer be required to undertake sexual reassignment surgery to formally register a change of sex. The current system and the current act unnecessarily medicalises the recognition of a person's lived identity. It is also very important, as part of this debate, that we acknowledge that surgery is not always wanted nor appropriate for trans people. It is incredibly inaccessible and very expensive—up to \$100,000—and it is incredibly invasive. The reforms that are in this bill are about making sure that a person's legal identity matches their lived identity. A birth certificate has a deep social and emotional resonance for people.

Some speaking to this bill have made reference to the submission of the Human Rights Commission. I have had a look at that. That submission supports this bill, stating that it—

... delivers reforms which are essential to ensure the privacy, freedom of expression and equality before the law of people accessing Queensland's birth registration system—in particular, trans and gender diverse people and diverse families including same-sex families or same-sex parent families.

I acknowledge that the submission also makes recommendations around other ways to perhaps improve or change the reforms, but it is very clear that the Queensland Human Rights Commission supports this bill, as does the Queensland Family and Child Commission.

I do not propose to take my full speaking time because I know that there are a lot of speakers who would like to contribute to this debate, but I would like to conclude my contribution by acknowledging the presence in the public gallery of a lady by the name of Tuisina who is a Darra local who has come here to support her community. When I stand up to support this bill, I am standing up to support people like Tuisina, and I am standing up to support people in our community who support all of the diversity that exists in our great community. I can only commend this bill to the House in the strongest possible terms.