




Speech By  
**Mark Robinson**

**MEMBER FOR OODGEROO**

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Record of Proceedings, 28 November 2023

**INFORMATION PRIVACY AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL;  
PUBLIC RECORDS BILL**

 **Dr ROBINSON** (Oodgeroo—LNP) (5.06 pm): As a member of the Community Support and Services Committee, it was interesting to scrutinise the Public Records Bill which is being debated today in cognate with the information privacy bill. I will focus my brief contribution this afternoon on the former. I first want to acknowledge committee members and the good work of the committee in scrutinising the legislation, the secretariat and committee staff who worked on the bill.

The Public Records Bill is important, as it responds to recent work done that recommends changes to the Public Records Act. The main policy objectives of the bill as stated in the explanatory notes are to—

- provide a framework for making, managing and allowing access to public records in a way that benefits present and future generations
- minimise public authorities' ambiguity regarding the meaning of a public record under the *Public Records Act* (the Act)
- minimise the chance for relevant public records to be inappropriately managed
- recognise the importance of public records for Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples—

to ensure that consultation and the necessary inputs occur with Indigenous peoples in those cultural regards, and to reduce the risk of loss or alteration of public records, amongst a range of other objectives that have been well and truly covered by other speakers today.

While I will not be opposing this bill, I am concerned about several issues that have been raised during the work of the committee by stakeholders and submitters, chiefly relating to issues concerning integrity and integrity in government. Labor's 2017 mangocube affair involved allegations against the member for Miller in relation to the unauthorised disposal of public records through the deletion of his private email account. It was reported that 1,200 deleted items were identified as public records and were not authorised for deletion or disposal. Some of these items should have been retained permanently and others should have been retained for seven years.

While the CCC did not charge the minister due to what has been described by others as technical definitional grounds, the State Archivist recommended further strong action be taken and called for a wider inquiry. It has been concerning that the government has been very slow to act upon the calls for urgent change made by the then state archivist in 2017. I do not intend to go into a lot more detail on that. I note that shadow ministers and other speakers have done that and I would refer interested parties to those speeches.

Further, the bill does not give the State Archivist the same independence as other integrity officers, such as the Auditor-General, the Integrity Commissioner or the Queensland Ombudsman. As such, the bill does not fully address the independence issue around the State Archivist as they are still answerable to the minister. Ministerial interference with the State Archivist's investigation into the mangocube affair shows why this independence is required.

There are other matters of concern that are outlined in the statement of reservation of the committee, and I would encourage others to read that in more detail. I do not intend to go into that in any further depth. People can look to that statement of reservation for more detail. I conclude by saying that I will not be opposing the bill but that a new government is needed to fix Labor's integrity crisis. It is the only way forward. Queenslanders will need to show Labor the door in '24.