




Speech By
David Janetzki

MEMBER FOR TOOWOOMBA SOUTH

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MOTIONS

Labor Party, Together Union

 **Mr JANETZKI** (Toowoomba South—LNP) (5.37 pm): I wanted to make my contribution tonight about the last eight words of this very fine motion moved by my colleague the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. The last eight words of this motion are ‘the restoration of fair electoral laws and practices’. We have come a very long way in the past 10 years into the depths of gerrymandering and rigging of the electoral system in Queensland.

If there is one area of legislative reform that has been manipulated more badly than law and order, youth justice and the criminal laws of this state, it is the electoral laws of Queensland. It started in 2016 where with 18 minutes notice we saw a return to compulsory preferential voting. I note the member for Cooper was the last speaker to this motion. If there is one person who would be concerned about optional preferential voting, my guess is it would be the member for Cooper. That was in 2016.

I note the member for Sandgate on the backbench. He was up to his neck in the optional preferential voting deal on 18 minutes notice that night. There was no parliamentary process, no oversight by the public, no cabinet discussions and it was done in the dead of night with 18 minutes notice.

In 2017, on the eve of the state election, against the recommendations of the Belcarra report, property developer donations were banned. That was never recommended in the Belcarra report. That occurred on the eve of the 2017 election to nobble the Liberal National Party. In 2020 the Attorney-General came back to finish job. If members remember, the member for Redcliffe and Attorney-General would always be on her high horse and sanctimonious: ‘We want to take money out of politics.’ That was always the favourite contribution of the member for Redcliffe, the Attorney-General. Let us remember that. What about the \$25,000 that the Attorney-General took from the AWU in her first election campaign? She took money—

An honourable member interjected.

Mr JANETZKI: Yes, she will take the money out of politics alright.

Then we had the Star fundraiser and the \$4,500 that the Attorney-General took from an entity she was regulating! The Attorney-General was regulating it and still thought it appropriate to take the funding. In that particular tranche of amendments there were 229 amendments—over 100 pages—and they were circulated at 9.30 the night before. They were the biggest changes to the electoral system that Queensland had seen in a generation.

What to do now? Of course EARC, set up after the Fitzgerald inquiry, talked about optional preferential voting. The Leader of the Opposition has spoken about this. Optional preferential voting and the restoration of fair electoral laws and practices go hand in hand. Optional preferential voting was recommended by EARC, set up in the aftermath of the Fitzgerald inquiry, in a report delivered in November 1990. They were the biggest changes to the electoral system in Queensland’s history.

Under the leadership of the member for Nanango last term I introduced a private member's bill proposing optional preferential voting. I recall the research I did back then. My favourite quote in support of optional preferential voting was—

It will strengthen the democratic principle by allowing voters to allot preferences only for candidates they wish to elect while still permitting them to cast their preferences for every candidate if they so desire. The change involves no derogation from voters' democratic rights; in fact, it will enhance them. It affects no particular party. Its sole objectives are greater simplicity, greater clarity and greater speed.

Who could have possibly said that? It was Gough Whitlam! I submit that 'it's time'! It is time to bring back optional preferential voting in Queensland. It is time to give expression to the true democratic voice of Queenslanders in this state. It is time to restore fair electoral practices in Queensland because over there at the moment all we are getting are retirements and rebellion—

Mr de BRENNI: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Pause the clock. What is your point of order?

Mr de BRENNI: The member for Toowoomba South is well away from the scope of the motion or its amendment. I ask for your ruling.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

Mr JANETZKI: All we are getting over there are retirements and rebellion, leaks and dysfunction, and a government that must be turfed out. Queenslanders know that the only time it will change is when we change the government.

(Time expired)