



Speech By  
**Hon. Grace Grace**


**MEMBER FOR MCCONNEL**

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Record of Proceedings, 20 March 2024

## MOTIONS

### Labor Party, Together Union

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for State Development and Infrastructure, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (5.10 pm): I move the following amendment—

That all words after 'House' be omitted and the following inserted:

- (a) notes the rights of registered unions like the Together union to campaign on issues impacting their members and the community and their right to highlight what members of parliament are doing to respond to the issues raised;
- (b) notes the campaign branding is a matter for the respective union; and
- (c) notes all Labor members continue to listen to issues raised by their community, including union members and organisations.'

It has been a while, but true to form the member for Kawana and the Leader of the Opposition's hatred of registered unions is always under the surface. One does not have to scratch too deep. I can see the *Courier-Mail* front page now: 'Labor MPs support union campaign'. What a revelation! I never would have thought that I had ever seen it before. I can assure the member for Kawana that there is not one member on this side of the House who is not proud to be a member of the mighty Labor Party.

When a union runs a campaign, of course it uses its colours. In the Together union, it is purple. Surprise, surprise! The member for Kawana is like a broken record when it comes to his hatred for unions—well, just registered unions actually, because we know those over there all support the fake unions. He was the worst attorney-general and IR minister in Queensland's history who introduced draconian IR laws curtailing the unions' ability and democratic right to campaign on political issues. He then found out that his laws had to be repealed because the High Court found that similar provisions in New South Wales infringed on the implied right in the Constitution to freedom of communication on political matters. What a bungle! That is the essence: the High Court of this country has said that, constitutionally, unions have freedom of communication on political matters. That is the law in this land, and who takes umbrage to that? The worst attorney-general that this parliament has ever had.

I am a very proud unionist and a very proud member of the Labor Party. When I headed the union movement we worked on many campaigns in the community—it is something that is in our DNA—such as supporting the LGBTQ+ community for the same rights in society. The biggest community campaign that I have ever worked on was the Your Rights at Work campaign where community organisations came out of the woodwork to support the campaign that the unions had put together, and how successful was that campaign? We have a right—a democratic right—to raise issues that are relevant to workers and community members, whether it is fighting for the right to collectively bargain, fair and safe working conditions, equal paid maternity leave, DV leave, industrial manslaughter, and the list goes on. The unions have been leading the fight on these important issues and they have brought about real social and economic change.

Unions are democratic organisations which fight for issues their members are passionate about and often involve themselves in community campaigns—obviously something about which the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Kawana have no idea what they are talking about or how these organisations run. However, they were very quick to support the fake unions on their anti-vaccination campaign in the community and very quick to get up in this House and defend the anti-vaxxers during a world health pandemic. So it is all right to debrand yourself and do that—that is okay—but if others want to join in a community campaign somehow the member for Kawana says that they cannot do that.

It is constitutional. They have a right. They are able to do that and it has nothing to do with debranding. It is all made up, it is all rubbish and those opposite come in here and waste time. Instead of concentrating on the issues that workers and the people of Queensland want us to, what do those opposite do? They find little bits about debranding and community campaigns. Honestly and truly, this is such a tired, lazy opposition.

*(Time expired)*