




Speech By
Kim Richards

MEMBER FOR REDLANDS

Record of Proceedings, 20 March 2024

WORK HEALTH SAFETY AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Ms RICHARDS** (Redlands—ALP) (3.13 pm): I rise to support the Work Health and Safety and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. To have to listen to this bloke, seriously, with a track record in industrial relations. You cannot take that seriously for a second. Track record: wage freezes. Track record: voted against labour hire laws. Track record: voted against paid domestic and family violence leave. Track record: voted against industrial manslaughter laws. Seriously? I do not think for a moment that anyone in this chamber can take this fella seriously. Honestly! When we talk about representing workers—

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Bush): Use correct titles, member for Redlands.

Ms RICHARDS: Sorry. Nobody can take the member for Kawana seriously when it comes to protecting Queensland workers here in this state. That is absolutely an absurd proposition. I am not sure if the member for Kawana remembers the debate that we had on the previous piece of legislation around registered industrial organisations. It was well documented. The organisations that he asserts are representing Queensland workers are not registered. I remind everybody of this spaghetti diagram. This is what NPAQ looks like. This is NPAQ. I tabled it in my last contribution. I will table it again.

Tabled paper: Document, undated, titled 'QAS Group and NPAA Services Organisational Chart as at 2 November 2021' [414](#).

Quite frankly, you should be absolutely frightened if you are paying them any money to represent you as a worker here in Queensland. They have no credibility whatsoever. To hear from the other side about NPAQ and TPAQ, you only need to look at their shareholder structure, their operational structure, the individuals involved in those organisations to see it is a dodgy, Ponzi scheme, literally. I am telling you, every Queenslanders should be worried if they are paying fees to an association that is not a registered industrial organisation that will advocate strongly for Queensland workers.

I will take that a step further. On the last debate we had on industrial relations, we received a submission to the committee from the Hon. Justice Peter Davis, the President of the Industrial Court of Queensland.

Mr Lister interjected.

Ms RICHARDS: Member for Southern Downs, you remember well Justice Peter Davis's contribution.

Mr Lister interjected.

Ms RICHARDS: I will table this letter as well when I am done with it, member for Southern Downs—

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, members!

Ms RICHARDS: He was quite scathing about those associations that claimed to represent workers in the Industrial Relations Commission. You know that well, member for Southern Downs; I do not need to lecture you on that. If that evidence provided by the honourable—

Mr Lister: He should never have filed a submission—

Ms RICHARDS:—the Hon. Peter Davis—if that doesn't tell Queensland what organisations like NPAQ—

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock! Member for Southern Downs, the member is not taking your interjections. I caution you to stop yelling across the chamber.

Ms RICHARDS: If the submission made by the Hon. Peter Davis, President of the Industrial Court of Queensland, does not clearly outline which organisations misrepresent their ability to represent Queensland workers, nothing else does. There are three pages, and I will table that. He talks in here about lawyers coming in to represent as part of this organisation that are not actually representing rightfully Queensland workers. They are being charged fees that they should not be charged. It is all outlined and well documented in this letter. I will table that again for the benefit of all Queensland workers because I think they need to be aware of the scam that is being run by organisations that have themselves set up as associations.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 22 June 2022, from the President of the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission, Industrial Court of Queensland, Hon. Justice Peter Davis, to the former Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing, Hon. Grace Grace, regarding the Industrial Relations Act 2016 [415](#).

Would you have your local garden club as a registered association or your local hockey club represent you as a worker in the Industrial Relations Commission? I do not think you would. Quite frankly, to have sat and listened to 30 minutes of the member for Kawana talking down the great work that unions do to protect Queensland workers is outrageous—absolutely outrageous. Again, I go back to the spaghetti diagram. I urge everybody in this chamber to take a very close look at the names on that table and see how it is related. Have a look at where their premises are residing. See if you can find their constitution for a moment. It is not there. Quite frankly, again, to assert that organisations like NPAQ and TPAQ are capable of representing Queensland workers and giving them their best possible representation is outrageous.

This bill is about strengthening again the protection of Queensland workers. Every worker in Queensland deserves to come home safely. Health and safety representatives are important persons within a workplace, and they need to have the right training and the right provisions within legislation to make sure we can protect Queensland workers.

I am really proud of this piece of work that strengthens and promotes the role of health and safety representatives, and clarifies their powers so that they know what they can exercise and the functions they can perform. This bill will promote consultation with workplace health and safety officers, and every industry is very different. Health and safety representation in a hospital context is very different to that in a construction context. Making sure we have health and safety representatives who have the right training and who understand their role in the workplace to keep workers safe is of paramount importance.

Again, the committee did some great work. I congratulate the committee on the work they did. I had the opportunity to chair the public hearings before I transitioned over. I thank the member for Miller for concluding the report on this piece of work. The committee recommended that the bill be passed and made four other recommendations around developing guidance and resource materials for health and safety representatives and ensuring the Office of Industrial Relations considers how industry-specific knowledge is critical to HSRs. As I said, every workplace is very different—whether that be a hospital, a construction site or a dam site. These are very solid and sound recommendations. I was pleased to hear that the minister has taken all of that on board in terms of how the Miles Labor government continues to protect workers here in Queensland. I commend the bill to the House.