




Speech By
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**BRISBANE OLYMPIC AND PARALYMPIC GAMES ARRANGEMENTS AND
OTHER LEGISLATION BILL**

 **Ms ENOCH** (Algester—ALP) (8.13 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate of the Brisbane Olympic and Paralympic Games Arrangements and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024. Today around 60 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people arrived at parliament to participate in the annual Eric Deeral Indigenous Youth Parliament. They are a bright and energetic group of people who are incredibly active in their communities and who understand the important cultural, social and community role they will inherit. They are the next generation with which governments will consult, make policy and help close the gap. They are the next generation to hold our stories and to hold the responsibilities of future progress in our community. They are, for many of us, our hope for the future.

Today these young people witnessed the Crisafulli LNP government undermine any future relationship between First Peoples of this state and the Queensland government. The Premier has used his first day in parliament to abuse the processes of this place and show this next generation of Indigenous leaders—and all Queenslanders—that when he says something it means absolutely nothing. He has given absolutely no opportunity for these young people, or any Queenslanders, to have their say on this important bill. By sneakily and disrespectfully tacking the repeal of the Path to Treaty Act onto this bill, after he said that his government would act with decency and respect regarding this matter, he has fundamentally removed one of the greatest opportunities of this generation.

When the Path to Treaty Bill was passed by the last parliament, it was an historic moment made all the more significant by the fact that it was passed with bipartisan support. I can tell you, it was enthusiastic bipartisan support. It was heartfelt bipartisan support. When the Path to Treaty Bill was passed, the member for Broadwater, the now Premier, made a very stirring contribution to the debate at the time. I remember hearing him speak and thinking, 'This is quite remarkable.' He said—

Path to Treaty offers ... a fork in the road. Down one well-travelled path lies a discussion had for political purposes. It talks a big game but achieves little for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people—a path where political battlelines are drawn but ultimately ends with a decade wasted and no progress made. Down the other path is a treaty.

These were his words. They were strong words. Unfortunately, they are words that now mean nothing. Of course, we know that those words stirred something else in his party and he found himself in a position where he had to capitulate to the far right of his party to keep them all calm. We know that will happen again, given who he has on that side.

I said at the time that the Path to Treaty legislation, the first of its kind in our state, would be a course that would not always be comfortable or easy—that there would be times when it would be hard to navigate, when the truth would be painful and shameful, when the truth would open up challenges that would be so complex that our resolve to take these steps would be tested. Just three hours into the new parliament, the Premier has not only trashed every established convention today; he has failed every test of this legislation and trashed his own word. In doing so, he has trashed the relationship

between the First Peoples of this state and the Queensland government. He said that he would act with dignity and respect on this matter. He said that he does not want to cause angst. He said that he did not want to be decisive. The exact opposite has happened.

The way in which the Premier and his minister have conducted themselves is absolutely appalling. The Premier's handpicked Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, the member for Maroochydore, has refused to engage with the chair or any member of the Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry. She could not even pay the most basic of respects to the highly regarded people leading this significant work. Tonight in her contribution we hear, 'I don't have to do any of that because we told you a year ago we would not be doing it'—that you did not have to do any of that, that you did not have to show basic respect to people. In fact, the chair of the inquiry received an email today from the minister outlining the plans of the LNP—at the very same time as the government was announcing the repeal of the act in parliament. This has been the standard of the member for Maroochydore, the Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, led by the Premier. This is the standard: to treat the inquiry members with such disregard and disrespect. The Premier and his minister have also ignored the many groups that have called on the LNP to reconsider their position on the inquiry. On 12 November, Queensland Churches Together circulated a statement made by 13 faith leaders in Queensland including the Anglican Church, the Archdiocese of Brisbane and the Catholic diocese of both Townsville and Cairns, to name just a few.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Lister): Comments may come through the chair, but they are still interjections.

Ms ENOCH: I table a copy of that statement for the benefit of the House.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 12 November 2024, from the General Secretary, Queensland Churches Together, Rev. David Baker, to the Premier, Hon. David Crisafulli, enclosing a joint faith leaders' statement regarding the Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry [214](#).

I would hope that the member for Maroochydore, who would have received the exact same statement that every other member of parliament apparently received, has had some conversations with her own church about that statement and what that means in this House. Their statement expressed their 'profound concern about the Queensland government's intention to abolish the recently established truth-telling and healing inquiry'. The statement went on to say—

This independent inquiry is a vital public platform for listening to and recording stories; collating evidence to shine a light on our past; educating and fostering understanding about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories; and, making informed recommendations.

Government members interjected.

Ms ENOCH: I do not know why the members opposite are mocking the churches in their statement. This is their statement. They are mocking the churches. Today the Premier has ensured that the views of these faith leaders and any other Queenslanders will not be heard with regard to this legislation.

The Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry was fundamentally established to gather evidence, data and historical records scattered across the state's archives and in our government agencies, bring them all together in one place and then gently place them next to the lived experience stories generously and courageously offered by Indigenous and non-Indigenous Queenslanders. The protections and powers afforded to an inquiry meant that healing could be at the heart of their work. There have already been a number of individuals who have generously shared their sometimes traumatic experiences, shared their sometimes heartfelt and very personal stories, and many more had been preparing to be witnesses at future hearings—a task, I have to say, that takes its toll on the social and emotional wellbeing of so many. The Premier has now essentially cut them adrift.

What is to come of the three communities who had been preparing for a community truth-telling hearing: Cherbourg, Doomadgee and Minjerribah, or North Stradbroke Island? Last week the inquiry was due to conduct a community hearing in Cherbourg, a discrete Aboriginal community located in the Attorney-General's electorate of Nanango. I wonder if she has bothered to consult with her constituents in that community on this matter. I very much doubt it. The community, assisted by the inquiry staff, and members had been preparing since before the election but were told that due to the LNP's position the hearing would not go ahead. The Cherbourg community decided to go ahead anyway. Last Monday hundreds of people from all walks of life arrived to hear from a number of brave individuals who were willing to tell their stories. I was privileged to be there as the shadow minister and hear firsthand the accounts of life under the control of the Queensland government, what it was like to be separated from your family in dormitories on the mission or placed effectively as slave labour on various stations. I also heard of the intergenerational impact those acts have had on so many families in the community.

The people of Cherbourg said they would not be silenced. The Quandamooka people of Minjerribah, or North Stradbroke Island, have also said they would not be silenced and have continued on their path of truth-telling. The community of Doomadgee have also said they will not be silenced, but tonight on this day, this first day of parliament, the Premier has made sure they are, in fact, to be silenced. Those communities will have no say over this legislation, the legislation that is being rammed through the House tonight. The Premier has determined, in fact, that all Queenslanders—Indigenous and non-Indigenous—will have no say over this legislation, which I find despicable.

The Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry is not divisive, it is not offensive and it is not the referendum. Those things are two separate things. For the member for Maroochydore to continue this falsehood that somehow they are of the same thing is absolutely appalling. For her to not have a full understanding of what this actually means is absolutely appalling. The referendum was related to a constitutional question to change the Constitution and the people of Australia voted a particular way and we honour that. This work has nothing to do with a discrete and distinct question with regards to the Constitution. This is completely different. It is not divisive; it is not offensive. It is, as are all inquiries, an exercise in gathering the evidence and experiences, the data and records to better understand where we have come from and how we got here so we can fundamentally develop a path forward that is informed and has a chance of ensuring we do not make the same mistakes as were made in the past. It is like any other inquiry that this House has ever supported—and funded, by the way.

The member for Maroochydore and others feel as though the cost of an inquiry that is related to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is somehow offensive, so how about every other inquiry that has ever been conducted in this House? What about the inquiry that the member for Warrego is wanting to put into this House with regards to volunteering? What about that one? Was that going to happen for free? Tonight I will be moving amendments to this legislation, and I table them for the benefit of the House.

Tabled paper: Brisbane Olympic and Paralympic Games Arrangements and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024, amendment to be moved by Ms Leeanne Enoch MP [215](#).

Tabled paper: Brisbane Olympic and Paralympic Games Arrangements and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024, explanatory notes to Ms Leeanne Enoch's amendment [216](#).

Tabled paper: Brisbane Olympic and Paralympic Games Arrangements and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024, statement of compatibility with human rights contained in Ms Leeanne Enoch's amendment [217](#).

These amendments will ensure that the work of the inquiry is not, once again, scattered across agencies and institutions but is housed in one place, the people's place, so that all Queenslanders can have access to their own story. As we continue this debate tonight my thoughts are brought back to the almost 60 young Indigenous people participating in the Eric Deeral Indigenous Youth Parliament this week and watching this appalling breach of trust by the LNP.

Mrs Nightingale: Did you see their tears?

Ms ENOCH: I take that interjection. I hope that those opposite, the government, did take time to speak to those young people and to see the incredible upset and the tears they were shedding. I wonder whether the minister even showed her face. It is an appalling breach of trust for the LNP but—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Lister): Order! There are too many interjections.

Ms ENOCH: One young participant said to me today, 'This must be what it was like for our old people, the lack of consultation, the fight to be heard, the feeling that the government just wants to erase our state's history, to erase us.'

Mr Head: We're not erasing anything.

Ms ENOCH: You are erasing the Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry. That is what the LNP government is doing. I say to those young people and to all First Peoples: our stories will never be erased. I call on all Queenslanders to stand together. I call on all First Nations people. I call on traditional owners to all stand together: Yalanji Bama, Kaantju Bama, Yidinji Bama, Irukandji Bama, Djabugay, Durumbal, Bidjara, Bigambul, Kalkadoon, Wakka Wakka, Gubbi Gubbi, Yagara, Yugambeh, Gooreng Gooreng, Butchulla, Iningai, Jinibara, Quandamooka. I call on all traditional owners to stand together to ensure our stories will never, ever be erased—not by this LNP government, not by this Premier, not by that minister.

Our stories are important. Our history is important. Our history, our shared history, belongs to all of us: every single person in this House and every single constituent that those opposite—all of us—represent in this chamber. Our shared history is not always comfortable. Our shared history is not

always beautiful. Sometimes it is uncomfortable, sometimes it is ugly, but it is our story. Until we actually embrace it, we will never understand and never be fully reconciled as a state. We will never be able to close the gap because we will never accept the truth. We will never be able to then forge the path forward that makes a difference to people's lives.

Today and every day this side of the House, the Labor Party, will stand with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the telling of the truth and we will stand with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in ensuring that we have a reconciled Queensland and a Queensland that honours the work that must happen to close the gap.